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ABU 'L-ḤASAN 'ALĪ IBN ISMĀ'IL AL-AŠ 'ARĪ'S

AL-IBĀNAH 'AN UṢŪL AD-DIYĀNAH

(The Elucidation of Islām's Foundation)

A

TRANSLATION

WITH

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

WALTER C. KLEIN, PH. D., TH. D.

AMERICAN ORIENTAL SOCIETY
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TO

MY WIFE

PREFACE

Besides helping to advance the studies of the specialist, for whom it is primarily designed, this translation of the whole *Ibānah*—the first in a modern language, so far as I know—will, I hope, serve to introduce the non-expert, particularly the Christian theologian, to the resourceful intricacies of Muslim theology, with which most Christian thinkers are unacquainted, to their loss.

I thank the Editors of the American Oriental Society for granting my monograph a place in the AMERICAN ORIENTAL SERIES. To Mrs. Alexander MacIntosh and to my wife I am beholden for intelligent and accurate typing. Finally, I am glad to have an opportunity of acknowledging my debt to those who, by their interest and advice, have eliminated from this work many of the imperfections it contained in its original form: the late Professor Gottheil, his successor Professor Jeffery, Professor Gray, Dr. Marcus, and Dr. Halkin, all of Columbia University; and Dr. Della Vida, of the University of Pennsylvania.

WALTER C. KLEIN

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TRANSLITERATION

أ	'	Not represented at the beginning of a word.	ض	ḍ
ب	b		ط	ṭ
ت	t		ظ	ẓ
ث	ṯ		ع	ʿ
ج	j		غ	ġ
ح	ḥ		ف	f
خ	ḫ		ق	q
د	d		ك	k
ذ	ḏ		ل	l
ر	r		م	m
ز	z		ن	n
س	s		ه	h
ش	š		و	w
ص	ṣ		ى	y

INTRODUCTION

I.

THE FIRST THREE CENTURIES OF ISLĀM

In every religious fellowship of sufficient size and permanence three forms of activity appear soon or late and the prosperity, if not the life, of the community depends upon its ability to reconcile these clashing forces. Traditionalism, rationalism, and mysticism have entered into the composition of Islām, as into that of other religions. Early in the twelfth century, after long and acrimonious struggles, the Sunnite division of the Community, in the person of al-Ġazālī, the most illustrious of all Muḥammad's followers, reached an adjustment in which all three trends were accepted and combined. The achievement of this integration did not, of course, stabilize Sunnite Islām completely. Nevertheless, al-Ġazālī's work stands, for he recapitulated, in his own interior growth, the developments of the centuries before him and, when he had attained to a symbolic peace in his own soul, handed on to posterity an Islām at last mellow and mature.

Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Aš'arī, the author of the *Ibānah*, is commonly regarded among his fellow Muslims as the founder of the school to which al-Ġazālī, as a theologian, belonged. These two persons with a third and earlier one, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, are of cardinal importance in Muḥammadanism. Aḥmad (died 855) stood for the primitive Islām of Muḥammad's Companions. To his mind, revelation and tradition, accepted with no attempt to resolve their disharmonies, were the groundwork of religion. He was a fundamentalist, an obscurantist, an authoritarian. He could not abide speculation on theological questions. However, less than a century later, al-Aš'arī (died 935), a liberal reconverted in middle life to orthodoxy, succeeded, while professing to be an adherent of Aḥmad's, in drafting the *kalām*,[1] or dialectical method, into the service of Sunnite theology. When his work was done, institutionalism and rationalism had come to terms. It remained only for al-Ġazālī to introduce the third element, mysticism, into their union.

Each of these men may be regarded as the most eminent and successful representative of a certain drift in the Islāmic religion. Others, however, had attempted what only they accomplished. Aḥmad was not the

[1] Literally "speech." The word was applied not only to the dialectical method, but also to the discussions in which it was used and the body of doctrine that resulted.

only traditionist; others before al-Aš'arī had tried to take away the reproach of the *kalām*, and two of his contemporaries were pioneer theologians like himself; and finally al-Ġazālī, from one point of view, simply marks the culmination of a sequence of developments clearly traceable in the theologians of the Aš'arite school. Neither did these key figures lack successors. About 1300 Ibn Taymiyyah revived Aḥmad's rigorism, and again in the eighteenth century Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb returned to the same simple position. Al-Aš'arī's school elaborated his teachings, and all Sunnite Islām, since al-Ġazālī's day, has borne the stamp of the great Sheikh's doctrine and practice. Nor were the three leaders wholly successful. Aḥmad's heroic witness to the truth as he accepted it did not extirpate rationalism, nor did al-Aš'arī's *kalām* make a complete end of it, for in the thirteenth century it still flourished in Persia and Faḫr ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī, a member of the Aš'arite school, adopted some of its doctrines. In the West al-Aš'arī and al-Ġazālī were execrated.

It is evident, then, that the course of change through which the main stream of Islām passed was far from being a simple one. But what of the separatists? Each group had its own origin, its own history. Some have survived to the present, others have perished or continued only in attenuated or modified forms. How can this welter of sects be made intelligible to a novice? It is only against the background of Islām's political history that its religious development can be presented to the reader with a semblance of clarity and order. The justice of this observation is amply confirmed by the opening paragraphs of the earliest extant work dealing with religious groups in Muḥammadanism, al-Aš'arī's *Maqālāt*:

> For him who seeks knowledge of religious groups and the ability to tell them apart acquaintance with the opinions and the views held in Islām is essential. I have seen people, in the accounts they give of the various views and in the books they write on the philosophical schools and the religious groups, err (1) by treating their subject too concisely; or (2) by making a faulty statement of their opponents' beliefs; or (3) by boldly giving a false account with the intention of discrediting those who differ from them; or (4) by making no attempt at thoroughness in their report of the different views; or (5) by tacking onto the beliefs of their opponents what they suppose is perforce proved to follow from these beliefs. (This is the method neither of the rabbis nor of those wise scholars who are careful to make the necessary distinctions.) My experiences along that line have moved me to undertake the following exposition of the question of views and to do it in brief compass, avoiding lengthy and detailed treatment. I begin my exposition of these things with God's help and by His power.
>
> After the Prophet's death men disagreed about many things, concerning which some accused others of error and some repudiated others, with the result that they were split up into distinct factions and various parties. Nevertheless, Islām embraces and includes them all.
>
> The first dissension to arise among the Muslims after the death of their Prophet was their disagreement regarding the imāmate.[2] This is the way it came about. When God took the Prophet and translated him to Paradise and the abode of His favors, the Helpers met in the porch of the Banū Sā'idah in al-Madīnah and decided to invest Sa'd ibn 'Ubādah with the imāmate. Abū Bakr and 'Umar learned of it and made for the meeting of the Helpers[3] with some of the Emigrants.[4] Abū Bakr informed them that the imāmate belonged exclusively to the Qurayš[5] and quoted against them the Prophet's words "The imāmate belongs to the Qurayš;" whereupon they yielded, being convinced by this argument, and returned obediently to the truth. Afterwards the Helpers said, "Let us choose a leader (*amīr*), and you choose a leader." Afterwards Al-Ḥubāb ibn al-Mundir unsheathed his sword and said, "I am their well-rubbed stock and their propped-up palm. Who will do battle with me?" Afterwards Qays ibn Sa'd undertook to aid his father Sa'd ibn 'Ubādah, so that 'Umar ibn al-Ḫaṭṭāb made his well-known statement about him. Then they acclaimed Abū Bakr, agreed upon his imāmate, were of one accord regarding his caliphate, and yielded obediently to him; and he fought against the renegades because of their defection, just as the Apostle of God had fought against them because of their unbelief; wherefore God gave him victory over them all and aided him against all the backsliders, and there was a general return to Islām, and God made clear, by his agency, the illuminating truth. The disagreement after the Prophet's death concerned the imāmate, and no other difference arose during the life of Abū Bakr or in the time of 'Umar, until 'Uṯmān ibn 'Affān was in power, and certain persons, in his latter days, disapproved of his acts—persons who sinned in the accusations they made against him, departing from the strait and narrow path. Hence it was that the things of which they disapproved in him became a source of dissension that has continued to the present day. Then he was assassinated and they disagreed concerning his assassination. As for the upright followers of the *sunnah*,[6] they say, "He was blameless in his acts; his assassins slew him wrongfully and unrighteously." Others make a contrary statement. This is a matter of disagreement among people to the present day.
>
> Then 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib was acclaimed caliph; whereupon people

[2] The person who succeeded to the Prophet's leadership of Islam was called the "caliph" (Arabic *ḫalīfah* "vicar" or "substitute"), the "*imām*," and the "leader (*amīr*) of the faithful."

[3] See below, 5. [4] L. c.

[5] Muḥammad's tribe. They were defeated at the Battle of Badr (624) and accepted Islām in 630.

[6] Plural *sunan*. The custom of the Prophet.

disagreed as to his authority: some denied that he was *imām*; others refused him active support; still others asserted their belief in his imāmate and accepted his caliphate. This is a matter of disagreement among people to the present day.

Then arose the dissension in 'Alī's time concerning the authority of Ṭalḥah and Az-Zubayr and the war they waged with him, and concerning Mu'āwiyah's contest with him. 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah met at Ṣiffīn, and 'Alī fought with Mu'āwiyah until the swords of both sides were broken, their lances drooped, their strength was spent, and they sank to their knees. When they stood thus face to face in fear and hatred, Mu'āwiyah said to 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ, "O 'Amr, isn't it true that you have never yet been in a difficult position without being able to find a way out of it?" . . . 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ said to him, "The condition I make is that you do not remove Egypt from my control so long as I live."[7] He replied, "It is granted, by the faith and covenant of God!" 'Amr said, "Let the command be given to lift up the exemplars of the Qur'ān, then let the Syrians say to the 'Irāqites, 'O 'Irāqites, the Book of God is our judge. A truce, a truce!' Then, if he grants you what you desire, his followers will quarrel with him; and, if he quarrels with you, his followers will quarrel with him." 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ, in the counsel he gave, was like one who beholds secret things from behind a thin veil. Therefore Mu'āwiyah commanded his followers to raise the exemplars and to carry out the directions of 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ. Then they did so, and the 'Irāqites made a demonstration against 'Alī and would hear of nothing but arbitration, requiring him to send an arbitrator and Mu'āwiyah to send an arbitrator. Hence 'Alī consented to the demand of the 'Irāqites, when he saw that they would not accept a refusal. When 'Alī had consented, and Mu'āwiyah and the Syrians had sent 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ as arbitrator, and 'Alī and the 'Irāqites had sent Abū Mūsā as arbitrator, and these two had exchanged pledges of good faith, 'Alī's followers fell into disagreement with him. They said, "God has said, 'fight against that party which doth the wrong, until they come back to the precepts of God;'[8] but He does not say, 'Arbitrate with them.' (They are the wrongdoers.) Therefore, if you resume hostilities with them and confess that you played the part of an infidel in consenting to their proposal of arbitration, well and good; but, if not, we will fight with you and war against you." Then 'Alī said, "I refused to do what you demanded at the beginning of this affair, but you would hear of nothing except my consenting to what they asked, so I consented and exchanged pledges of faith with them. I cannot go back on my word." Therefore they would hear of nothing but deposing him and declaring him an infidel because of the arbitration. They "went out"[9] in opposition to him, and for this reason they are called the Ḫārijites, namely because they "went out" in opposition

[7] If Mu'āwiyah will make 'Amr governor of Egypt for life, 'Amr will render the needed assistance.

[8] Qur'ān 49. 9.

[9] See below, 6.

to 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib; and it became a matter of disagreement that has lasted to the present day.[10]

What are the facts?

Muḥammad had been both a prophet and a political leader. In the former capacity he had enjoyed unrestricted authority and none of his Companions could legitimately dream of inheriting either his gifts or his prestige. Unfortunately, when he died, his prophetic legacy was in chaotic condition. The Qur'ān, which for most parties in Islām has always been the primary source of belief and discipline, had yet to be collected, and was not in fact issued in acceptable form until about twenty years after Muḥammad's death. From the start, the task of the Community was to apply the revealed truth it possessed—a truth as yet uncodified—to questions as they arose, and to develop principles to control its application. Intertwined with this problem was another, that of the selection of a ruler, and its solution admitted of no delay. In the temporal sphere the Prophet's authority had been less absolute than in the eternal, but it can hardly be doubted that his nominee for the caliphate, had there been one, would have been accepted with little question. There is, however, no certain evidence that he had committed the government of the Community to any single person. The Šī'ah, the party that later supported the claims of 'Alī, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, maintained that Muḥammad had "designated" 'Alī to succeed him. Abū Bakr, on the other hand, is represented as enunciating the principle that the *imām* or caliph is to be chosen from the Qurayš, and Sunnite Islām accepted this principle. The truth seems to be that Muḥammad had left no ruling in the matter. It was to be anticipated that grave differences of opinion would exist in the absence of such a pronouncement.

The kernel of the caliphate problem, to which most of the theological differences of Islām are closely or distantly related, lies in the state of affairs that existed in al-Madīnah in 632, at the Prophet's death. There was as yet no legitimist faction: 'Alī's title to the caliphate, later so insistently urged, found no effective sponsors at that time. Three other parties, however, can plainly be discerned. The *Emigrants* had shared persecution with the Prophet and followed him to al-Madīnah. The *Helpers,* inhabitants of the town, had rallied to his cause. His conquest of the *Qurayš* had brought these former enemies of his to their knees, but they remained opportunists and self-seekers despite their profession of Islām. The Helpers had a candidate at the first election, against whom Abū Bakr, the most venerable and esteemed person in the Community at that moment, won the day. Much of his energy, during his short

[10] *Maqālāt* 1-5.

rule, was devoted to stabilizing the organization of Islām in Arabia. Before his death he nominated 'Umar, the next caliph. The decade of the latter's tenure of office was the golden period of Arab rule. The swift extension of Muslim power to Syria, 'Irāq, Persia, and Africa made organization essential, and under the circumstances this organization had to be of a military nature. The Arabs were quartered in immense camps. An effort was made to preserve the simplicity and mobility of desert life. The soil of the subdued countries was left in the hands of the vanquished, who had to pay a tax on it. Settled occupations were made taboo for the Muslims. The revenues derived from land- and poll-taxes, as well as the booty that came into the possession of the Arab forces, were spent in the maintenance of the victors.

A little corruption sufficed to bring this halcyon era to a close. When, at 'Umar's death, 'Uṯmān prevailed over the other members of the group of six named by 'Umar as eligible to the caliphate, the beginning of disunion was in sight. 'Uṯmān was an Umayyad.[11] He was charged with displaying unjust favor towards his kinsmen and friends, dissatisfaction grew, and finally he was slain in al-Madīnah (656) by a group of rebels headed by Abū Bakr's son.

The leaders of Islām were now hopelessly at odds. They had scarcely lifted a finger to prevent the murder of 'Uṯmān, but, the deed once done, vengeance was demanded. 'Alī accepted the caliphate, only to cope with trouble in all quarters. At the Battle of the Camel he whipped 'Ā'išah, Ṭalḥah, and Zubayr, but when Mu'āwiyah, to whom the Umayyads had committed their destinies, met him in combat at Ṣiffīn, his descent to ruin commenced. Mu'āwiyah, worsted, appealed to the Book to compose their differences. The Qur'ān readers in 'Alī's ranks called loudly for a favorable answer to this proposal. Against his better judgment, 'Alī made a tragic concession. Two commissioners were appointed to arbitrate between the rivals: 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ representing Mu'āwiyah; Abū Mūsā al-Aš'arī, an ancestor of our al-Aš'arī's, acting for 'Alī, to whose cause he was not deeply attached. These two came to an understanding before the formal meeting, and, when the court sat, Abū Mūsā betrayed his superior, and 'Alī was deposed. Immediately the decision became known, a group of malcontents went out to make common cause with another party, which had forsaken 'Alī on learning that the Qur'ān was not, after all, to determine the issue. These people, the first Ḫārijites,[12] were in part disloyal or unreasonable trouble makers (largely from the tribe of Tamīm), in part Qur'ān scholars. They were beaten by 'Alī at Nahrawān the year after the arbitration (658). 'Alī died at al-Kūfah (661) by the hand of Ibn Muljam, one of these fanatics, after witnessing the steady growth of Mu'āwiyah's fortunes.

[11] The clans of Hāšim and Umayyah were separate groups within the tribe of Qurayš. The Prophet and the 'Abbāsid caliphs were Hāšimites, while 'Uṯmān and the Umayyad caliphs belonged to the other group.

[12] From *ḫaraja* "to go out." On the other names applied to them see *Maqālāt* 127, 128.

The Ḫārijites gave small comfort to the Umayyad dynasty of caliphs, which began with Mu'āwiyah. Their exploits, however, are of no relevance here. We have only to evaluate their influence on orthodox theology. They were at one in branding 'Alī as an infidel for consenting to the arbitration. They had recourse to the Qur'ān to prove this and other points.[13] 'Alī, they asserted, was the "bewildered man,"[14] and the Ḫārijites who fought with him at Nahrawān were "his companions" who "call him to the true guidance." Again, 'Alī was "the man who surpriseth thee by his discourse concerning this life present,"[15] and Ibn Muljam, his murderer, was "the man . . . who selleth his life out of desire to please God."[16]

The Ḫārijites maintained that the caliph needed no dignity of birth, but only the qualification of righteousness; and that if he lost this claim to his position he was to be deposed. Their intercourse with the Muslims outside their own sect gave occasion for the development of theological differences within the Ḫārijite group. What was the religious status of these Muslims? Were they to be slain and spoiled at all times, or only in open war? Were their children to be killed at once or allowed to reach maturity and then compelled to choose between faith (Ḫārijism) and infidelity (non-Ḫārijite Islām)? What was the proper attitude towards the stay-at-homes in their own ranks, those who refused to "emigrate" to battle? The Azraqites were the strait sect among the Ḫārijites. Moderation found a place with the Najdiyyah and the Ibāḍiyyah. The question of mortal sins was the most important of the many questions under discussion. All except the Najdiyyah considered mortal sin unbelief and were convinced that the mortal sinner would suffer eternal punishment. The liberal factions softened this doctrine, and in their theology, which distinguished at least five grades of belief and unbelief, there was an effort towards a milder and more reasonable solution of the problem.

The Ḫārijites were not the only sect that owed its origin to 'Alī's misfortunes. It was to be expected that some Muslims would feel he had been defrauded of his rights in being passed over at three elections and raised only late in the day to the caliphate. 'Abdallāh ibn Sabā', a converted Jew, had hailed 'Alī with the words, "Thou art Thou," meaning.

[13] Ibid. 102. 103. [14] Qur'ān 6. 70. [15] Ibid. 2. 200. [16] Ibid. 2. 203.

"Thou art God," and 'Alī had banished him for what must have seemed to him a blasphemous assertion. 'Abdallāh's followers, however, believed that 'Alī was not dead, but would return to fill the world with righteousness, and that a divine particle resided in him and was handed down by transmigration (*tanāsuḫ*) to his successors in the imāmate. From such beginnings grew the bizarre doctrines of the Šī'ites. We must extend our digression to include a concise sketch of them.

There lay behind the strange beliefs of the Šī'ites and their opposition to the Sunnite caliphs much more than disinterested devotion to the 'Alids and sympathy for them in their tribulations. On their victorious emergence from the Peninsula the Arabs met a complex of religious, political, and cultural concepts and habits, which the older nations, even when converted to the new religion, could not wholly put away. Some of these ideas were intruded into Islām. Old doctrines, Jewish, Christian, and Magian, reasserted themselves against the upstart teaching of the Prophet.[17]

Šī'ism produced a new interpretation of Islām. Muḥammad, while accepting a certain measure of adulation, had never suffered his admirers to lose sight of his humanity, and his followers had, indeed, sometimes questioned his judgment and opposed him.[18] The Šī'ite *imām* was fundamentally different; he was a divinity, or the abode of a divine spirit, and possessed immunity from both sin and error. The mainspring of the Prophet's religion—originally, at least—was his conviction of an impending judgment and of the reality of paradise and hell. Šī'ite allegory often explained the latter away. The Sunnites at an early, although undetermined, date, closed the gate of the *ijtihād*.[19] The bounds within which religion was to function were firmly established, and by al-Aš'arī's time the fixation of the law had precluded almost all initiative. Mysticism and rationalism were the only ways of escape. Šī'ism preferred a perpetual revelation through the *imām* to the Sunnites' frozen tradition. In some sects prophecy was not limited to him, and even ordinary persons sometimes claimed a supernatural provenance for their most casual ideas. *Mujtahids* [20] have continued to appear among the Šī'ah. Beyond this, there was the antinomianism of many of the Šī'ah sects, which in some cases transcended the distinction between good and evil. The end

[17] The Šu'ūbiyyah movement was an effort in the same direction, pursued along cultural lines.

[18] Andrae, Die Person Muhammeds 24, 25.

[19] Literally, "effort," "struggle." Independent formulation of belief. Creation of an original system or school. The authority of the founder of a system or school.

[20] Those who exercise *ijtihād*.

visualized by the Šī'ah was the advent of the *mahdī*, or final *imām*, to consummate the eternal design to the execution of which his predecessors had contributed from generation to generation. The Sunnites had their apocalyptic doctrine, to be sure, but the Šī'ah differed from them here as elsewhere. They believed in a return (*raj'ah*) of the dead for a second death before the resurrection, and some of them taught the eternity of matter—a doctrine for which the Sunnites had a well-nigh pathological loathing. Some believed themselves immortal, others discarded the Islāmic belief in a resurrection. Moreover, the Šī'ah repudiated 'Uṯmān's edition of the Qur'ān and pursued their own peculiar course in the interpretation of the Book. Finally, some called the Prophet a liar and said that he had stolen 'Alī's thunder.

Al-Aš'arī arranges the sub-sects of the Šī'ah in three sections. (a) The *Ġāliyyah* are so called "because they went to extremes (*ġalā*) with regard to 'Alī and made tremendous claims for him." [21] (b) The *Rāfiḍah* are the central group, in whose views the vicissitudes of the twelve *imāms* are reflected. (c) The *Zaydiyyah* are the liberals, who modify the usual Šī'ite attitude of antagonism to the first three caliphs so far as to recognize the first two and, in the cases of some sects, the third as well.

A brief sketch of the second group will enable us to follow the history of Šī'ism in outline to and beyond al-Aš'arī's day.[22] The *Rāfiḍah* consisted of (1) the *Imāmiyyah*, who recognized the entire line of twelve *imāms*, and (2) the various sects that stopped short of the full tale of twelve and departed from the main channel of succession at one point or another. 'Alī was succeeded by his son al-Ḥasan, a voluptuary who surrendered his rights to Mu'āwiyah. The next *imām* was his brother al-Ḥusayn, who was cut down with his small company at Karbalā' in A. H. 61. 'Alī the Younger then succeeded. Already there was one schismatic party, the *Kaysāniyyah*, who believed in the right of 'Alī's son, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah, to the imāmate. We may use them to illustrate the proliferation of sub-sects to be found in the branches of the Šī'ah. Al-Aš'arī numbers eleven groups among the *Kaysāniyyah*.[23] They differed as to the way in which Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah had been appointed, some holding that the designation had come directly from 'Alī himself, others that it had come through al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn. They were divided as to Muḥammad's fate, some believing that he was dead, others that he was hidden on Mount Raḍwā, awaiting the time to reappear. They could not even agree on the reason for this

[21] *Maqālāt* 5.

[22] Al-Kulaynī, the earliest Šī'ite traditionist, was a contemporary of al-Aš'arī's.

[23] *Maqālāt* 18 ff.

concealment. The succession was a further occasion of schism. Abū Hāšim, Muḥammad's son, followed him in the imāmate. After his death, 'Alī, his nephew, and several others were acclaimed by divers groups. One of these was an 'Abbāsid, another a member of the tribe of Tamīm. Finally, one sub-sect recognized 'Alī the Younger as *imām* after Abū Hāšim.

The fifth *imām,* Muḥammad al-Bāqir, gave rise to another faction, divided ultimately, like the rest, into many smaller parties.[24] Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq, the sixth *imām,* was an erudite scholar, and men of such eminence as Abū Ḥanīfah, Mālik ibn Anas, and Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā' sat under him. Ja'far and the mystic, Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, may be taken as representative of the period when the Islāmic sciences were as yet relatively unspecialized and scholars could display a versatility that later became impossible. Ja'far took a mean stand on the moot theological question of the *qadar.* He had fixed upon his son Ismā'īl for the imāmate, but the latter, besides being a reprobate, predeceased his father, and Mūsā al-Kāẓim succeeded. A large party, however, advocated Ismā'īl's claim, and to this group, called the "Seveners" and the "Ismā'īliyyah," many of the most romantic exploits of the Šī'ah are due. Maymūn the Oculist and his son 'Abdallāh conceived the amazing design of centering a carefully scaled organization about the Ismā'īliyyah pretensions. The initiates advanced from grade to grade and only the choicest were admitted to the final degrees of emancipation, where they dropped all connection with revealed religion. This plan was pursued through four generations before it issued in the establishment of the Fāṭimid dynasty in Egypt. Other parties centered about other sons of Ja'far, and the sect of the *Wāqifiyyah* left the parent trunk at the death of Mūsā al-Kāẓim.

From the death of al-Ḥusayn to the time of 'Alī ar-Riḍā', the eighth of the series, the *imāms* lived obscurely in al-Madīnah, making no effort to vindicate their claims by force of arms, although more than one adventurer was willing to try his fortune in the rôle of champion. 'Alī was cast for a more conspicuous part. At Hārūn ar-Rašīd's death the empire had been divided between his two sons, al-Amīn, the focus of the Arab party's hopes, and al-Ma'mūn, who was Persian in his sympathies. The latter summoned 'Alī from his retirement and put him in line for the caliphate. It was a time when both the Mu'tazilah and the Šī'ah were favored by the ruling power. But 'Alī died in Ṭūs while returning from Ḫurāsān to Baġdād with the caliph, and from this time on the hopes of the Šī'ah were blighted. Muḥammad at-Taqī and, after him, 'Alī an-Naqī, held the office of *imām,* the latter dying a prisoner at Sāmarrā in 868. Long

[24] Ibid. 23 ff.

before this date, the caliph al-Mutawakkil, the third successor of al-Ma'mūn, had instituted a persecution of the Mu'tazilah and the party of 'Alī. The last two *imāms* were al-Ḥasan al-'Askarī, who died in captivity at Sāmarrā, and Muḥammad al-Mahdī,[25] who vanished about 869 and was represented for seventy years after that by four successive agents (*wakīls*).

It is high time to resume the history of the Sunnite caliphate. From 661 to 750 the Umayyads governed the Muslim empire from Damascus. Their secularity was unmistakable. Only one of them, 'Umar II, was a devout man, and his rule was short. The Sunnites had now to face a problem that arose, not out of division, but out of the scandal given by a succession of caliphs who, while they confessed Islām, did not scruple to shed the blood of the devout in order to establish their authority. Apart from open rebellion, three responses to this situation were possible. (1) One might favor and further the policy of the rulers, and there were many who took this course. (2) One might, while offering them no aggressive resistance, show one's disapproval of them by mute opposition. There grew up a class of persons who, in their practice of *wara'* "self-restraint," believed that they were preserving the *zuhd* "simple living" of the first caliphs. (3) A third adjustment to these conditions was that of the Murjites—not, accurately speaking, a sect, but the representatives of a point of view widely adopted because it enabled those who held it to satisfy the claims both of religion and of citizenship. The Murjites did not go the length of withholding obedience from the rulers and calling them unbelievers, but they refrained from identifying themselves with the Umayyad programme. This attitude was encouraged by some teachers of religion, and in time it led to discussions of faith as against unbelief and sin. Although not a great deal is known about the historical development of the theology of this sect or that of the Ḫārijites, we see clearly in al-Aš'arī's accounts of the two that the questions in which they were most interested had been subjected to searching discussion long before his day. Not only is this true, but the problems usually associated with the rationalistic trend in Islām, to which the next section will be devoted, did not escape the other sects, which were by no means water-tight.

The 'Abbāsids remain to be considered, for it is in the period during which this house held the caliphate that al-Aš'arī lived. The Qurayšite clan of the Banū Hāšim included both the 'Alids and the 'Abbāsids, and the latter rose to power largely by capitalizing this connection. While the Umayyads pursued their course of self-indulgence and oppression at

[25] A mysterious and largely legendary figure.

Damascus, Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdallāh ibn ʿAbbās made the place of his banishment, Ḥumaymah, on the limits of Palestine and Arabia, a centre of ʿAbbāsid intrigue. Here Abū Hāšim, the son of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah the son of ʿAlī, died, and the ʿAbbāsids declared that his title to the caliphate had passed to them. The two members of the house who were to be the first caliphs of the new line, with the aid of the Šīʿah, who had thrown in their lot with them, prevailed over the last Umayyad caliph at the Battle of the Zāb in 750.

The second ʿAbbāsid caliph, al-Manṣūr, made the city of Baġdād his capital in 762. It was the commencement of a new age in Islām. The caliph, now a despot, had a vizier to administer his affairs and an executioner to give swift effect to his displeasure. Under these conditions, the military element in the state ultimately gained great power. Luxury, contention, and decay supplanted the better conditions of an earlier time. The undisputed dominance of the Arabs was at an end. The dynasty reached the summit of its splendor under Hārūn. When he died, in 809, a bitter contest between the Persian and the Arab factions began. The defeat of the Arabs led to the temporary victory of unorthodoxy, but when al-Mutawakkil became caliph in 847 he brought both the heterodoxy and the prosperity of the ʿAbbāsids to an end. It was no longer possible to prevent the formation of independent states in regions outside the caliph's control. Finally, in 945, the Buwayhids, a Persian dynasty favorably disposed towards the Šīʿah, established themselves in Baġdād and left the caliph nothing but his title.

Two departments of religious activity need to be touched upon before this portion of our study can pretend to completeness. Mysticism and canon law [26] stand at opposite ends of the scale, the former commonly indicating to the religionist the maximum of opportunity, the latter the minimum of requirement. In Islām practical necessity brought about the crystallization of the law at an early date. The four recognized schools of law are those of Abū Ḥanīfah (died 767), Mālik ibn Anas (died 795), aš-Šāfiʿī (died 820), and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (died 855). All are accepted and their differences are regarded as legitimate and tolerable. There is considerable diversity in the methods by which the founders of these schools reached their conclusions—a matter that interests us here because these methods necessarily bore a close resemblance to those of the theologians and were simply, in the hands of the latter, the same tools adapted to a somewhat different kind of work. Both the lawyer and the theologian grounded their work upon the Qur'ān. It was the primary "root" of the law. What was the precise relation of the

[26] Canon and civil law are not clearly separated in Islām.

sunnah to the Qur'ān? Was the latter to be interpreted by reference to the *ḥadīṯ* or by some other method? Abū Ḥanīfah and his followers employed *ra'y* "opinion," *istiḥsān* "preference" (on the basis of expediency), and *qiyās* "analogy." These instruments, however, were suspect among the conservatives of al-Madīnah, where Mālik sought the answers to legal questions in tradition. Aš-Šāfiʿī cultivated the "root" called *ijmāʿ* "agreement," admitting *qiyās* in cases where the other roots gave no solution. Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal was not really a lawyer at all, but an obscurantist and fundamentalist, who took his stand upon the Qur'ān and the *sunnah*, and refused to acknowledge any other roots either in law or in theology.[27] The methods of these two sciences were closely related, since both dealt with the same material. Al-Ašʿarī often employs *ijmāʿ* in the *Ibānah*, although so strict an adherence to Aḥmad's views as he professed should have restricted him to the two fundamental roots. He is thus a Šāfiʿite rather than a pure Ḥanbalite, even in the *Ibānah*. It may be that the tradition representing him as a Mālikite was inspired by a desire to identify him more definitely with fundamentalism. One infers from the *Ibānah* that he did not value *qiyās* highly, but whatever his views regarding it, he wrote a book on the use of this root.[28]

Mysticism, in its most comprehensive meaning, includes asceticism, devotional exercises designed to produce mystical states in those who use them, and the doctrine that is a rationalization of these states. All three of these elements occur, combined with a conspicuous earthiness, in Muḥammad. Islāmic mysticism could therefore, like every other movement in Islām, quote the Qur'ān in its own favor. Nevertheless its development was predominantly the effect of influences from without. Before the Muslim period many Arab tribes had been converted to Christianity and these conversions had been wrought by monks. Christian asceticism afforded the Prophet and early Islām a ready pattern,[29] and Christian monks seem in fact to have been the principal mentors of the Muslim ascetics. Influence came from other quarters as well.[30]

The rigors of the nomad's life compelled him to learn and exercise profound patience and detachment. Certain features of the monastic life were therefore matters of every day experience to the Arab; its physical abstinences, at least, were not a novelty to him. ʿUmar was

[27] On the principles of the founders of the four schools, see R. Levy, An Introduction to the Sociology of Islām (1933) I 234 ff.

[28] Spitta, Zur Geschichte Abu'l-Ḥasan al-Ašʿarī's 63. Cf. 74 (no. 57).

[29] See particularly M. Smith, Studies in Early Mysticism in the Near and Middle East (1931).

[30] Nicholson (The Mystics of Islam 10 ff.) names four sources of influence: Christianity, Neoplatonism, Gnosticism, and Buddhism.

alive to the need of keeping these stern virtues active, as his system clearly shows. In later times men recalled admiringly the hard living the early caliphs were supposed to have preferred to the comfort of the world they had captured. Repeatedly single persons or groups adopted a mode of living expressive of these or similar ideals, but such movements often encountered keen disfavor. However, this current of Muslim mysticism, joined, as in the persons of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā', with learning and originality, was the guardian and transmitter of Islām's finest values. It preserved the old desert fortitude, refining it until it became a religious quality. It stood for an Islām undefiled with worldiness.

Every mystic is unique. Even though the pure love and the disinterested service of God underlie all Islāmic mysticism, the mystics themselves differed widely in the extent of their attachment to institutional Islām and the coincidence of their doctrine with orthodoxy. Some, like al-Qušayrī, felt it necessary to prove that mysticism was justified by the Qur'ān. Others were pantheists and showed no great concern about their detachment from the remainder of Islām. It was al-Ġazālī (died 1111) who finally removed the stigma from mysticism and reconciled it with orthodoxy.

Mysticism as such had little to contribute to the growth of theology. In certain respects, like Šī'ism, it was a menace and functioned as a warning against extremes. In the realm of devotion, the life beyond the law, its effect was deeper. The common word for mysticism, *taṣawwuf,* could be applied to the piety of al-Aš'arī. Mysticism, directly or indirectly, left its mark upon men of his calling. In addition, the usage of mysticism gave a distinctive turn to words commonly employed in other religious circles. Yet it was the least important of the forces that operated upon al-Aš'arī.

II.

THE MU'TAZILAH

Both the origin and the character of the Mu'tazilah are still matters of dispute. A rudimentary drift towards rationalism is evident in two earlier sects. Virtually at the outset of Islām's career, there were certain *ahl al-ahwā'* "people of straying impulses," who, in an effort to organize their religious ideas, held animated discussions and matched texts from the Qur'ān. The Tradition indicates that they met with disapproval and were regarded as an unruly element in the Community.[31] Later there arose a group of thinkers who dealt particularly with the question of the *qadar,* God's decree, and were styled the *Qadariyyah* because of their occupation with this problem. They held, in opposition to the rest of the Community, that man's will was not wholly under the domination of the decree. This sect had a political significance, which no doubt resulted from the fact that it was a closely knit group, and this compactness, in turn, was the natural consequence of the severe persecutions the party suffered at the hands of the Umayyads.[32] The designation *Qadariyyah* was also applied to the Mu'tazilah, but the latter resented it.

Whatever the Mu'tazilah inherited from these movements, their origin was an independent one. Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā' is traditionally mentioned as the first leader of the sect, and he is said to have enunciated his "mean" position in connection with a discussion of the place to be assigned mortal sinners among the Muslims. Wāṣil believed that they were neither Muslims in good standing nor unbelievers. Aš-Šahrastānī, in his résumé of Wāṣil's beliefs, includes this among the four principal doctrines he enumerates. The others are the denial of God's attributes, the assertion of man's free will, and an intermediate position as to the rival parties at the Battle of the Camel and the Battle of Ṣiffīn, Wāṣil having held that one of them was in the wrong, but not venturing to say which party it was. Al-Ḫayyāṭ says that this attitude of suspended judgment was "the way of the *ahl al-wara'* among the scholars." This stand on the caliphate, as Prof. Nallino has proved,[33] is the true *i'tizāl,* and therefore the position of the Mu'tazilah, at its commencement, was simply another of

[31] E. g. W. Patton, Aḥmed ibn Ḥanbal and the Miḥna (1897) 158 ff.

[32] See the references to the Qadariyyah in Wellhausen, The Arab Kingdom and its Fall, tr. M. G. Weir (1927).

[33] C. A. Nallino, "Sull' origine del nome dei mu'taziliti" Rivista degli studi orientali 7 (1916-18) 429-454. See 431 for a summary of interpretations of the name "Mu'tazilite."

the many attitudes adopted by various factions towards the most pressing question of the age.

Want of space forbids a protracted discussion of the content of Mu'tazilite doctrine. Indeed, it is sometimes difficult to know precisely whom we ought to regard as Mu'tazilites and whom not. Thus, Ibn ar-Rawandī is repudiated by the Mu'tazilite apologist al-Ḫayyāṭ, but included among the Mu'tazilah by al-Aš'arī. Al-Aš'arī's digest of their opinions on various questions is sufficient evidence of the variety of solutions they proposed. It is impossible to reproduce all these nuances of belief, and we shall have to limit ourselves to (a) the translation and discussion of certain general statements of doctrine; (b) a succinct study of one or two doctrines; and (c) an exposition of the teaching of al-Jubbā'ī, al-Aš'arī's master.

(a) The brief creed given by al-Ḫayyāṭ begs the question, since it maintains that the Mu'tazilah are blameless Muslims. Yet as an early statement of Mu'tazilite teaching by a moderate Mu'tazilite it is a convenient introduction to the subject. It reads as follows:

> As for the substance of Mu'tazilite belief, inclusive of all the Mu'tazilah, no blame or cavil regarding it is possible for you, so long as you profess the religion of Islām, because the Community in its entirety finds the Mu'tazilah reliable in the rudiments (*uṣūl*) they confess and profess, namely, that God is one ("nought is There like Him,"[34] "The eyes do not reach Him"),[35] and the terrestrial zones do not include Him; and that He does not pass from one condition to another, or cease or change or shift; and that He is "the first and the last and the manifest and the hidden;"[36] and that He is "God in heaven and God on the earth;"[37] and that He is "nearer to us than our neck vein"[38] ("Three shall not be gathered except He be the fourth, nor five except He be the sixth, nor fewer nor more, save He be with them wherever they be");[39] and that He is the Prior and all besides is contingent; and that He is just in His judgments, merciful to His creatures, regardful of His servants; and that He loves not wrong-doing and "approves not unbelief for His servants,"[40] and wills not injustice for the worlds; and that the best of creatures are those most obedient to Him; and that He is trustworthy in what He says, the Performer of His promise and His threat; and that Paradise is the abode of the pious and Hell the abode of the wrong-doers. Upon these beliefs the Community agrees and admits as trustworthy the adherence of the Mu'tazilah to them.[41]

At first sight these doctrines have an innocuous appearance; but al-Ḫayyāṭ purposely avoids technical expressions, and, therefore, his

[34] Qur'ān 42. 9.
[35] Ibid. 6. 103.
[36] Ibid. 57. 3.
[37] Ibid. 43. 84.
[38] Ibid. 50. 15.
[39] Ibid. 58. 8.
[40] Ibid. 39. 9.
[41] *Kitāb al-intiṣār* 5.

statement cannot be trusted, for all heretics regard themselves as orthodox. With this creed may be contrasted aš-Šahrastānī's summary of the Mu'tazilite tenets under ten heads: (1) their denial of God's eternal predicates; (2) their belief in the createdness of the Qur'ān; (3) their assertion that will, hearing, and sight are not eternal "ideas" (lit., "meanings") belonging to God's essence; (4) their denial of the beatific vision; (5) their repudiation of anthropomorphism; (6) their belief in man's free will and denial that God can create evil; (7) their belief that a wise God can do only what is salutary (*ṣalāḥ*) and good; (8) their belief that those Muslims who die obedient and repentant deserve bliss and those who die unrepentant of a mortal sin deserve eternal punishment, but their punishment will be lighter than that of the infidels;[42] (9) their beliefs that knowledge and a good disposition must precede the reception of God's message, that a knowledge of good and evil is necessary, and that the imposition of the law of religion is God's gift; (10) their differences concerning the imāmate, whether it is conferred by designation or by choice.[43]

The Mu'tazilah were called "the people of unity and justice." When the last of aš-Šahrastānī's ten heads is eliminated, one sees plainly that the other doctrines mentioned belong either to "unity" or to "justice."[44] These are the cardinal ideas of the Mu'tazilah, and to prove them true they developed the dialectical instrument known as the *kalām*. The latter was evolved at a time when Aristotle was as yet unknown in Arabic. Where, then, are we to seek for the suggestion that gave rise to it? There can be no doubt that here, as in the domains of asceticism and mysticism, the nearest model was that furnished by the Christians. No labored proof of this connection is necessary, since most scholars grant it. Wensinck[45] and Becker,[46] to cite no others, have shown how the Muslims were stimulated by their discussions with the Christians and appropriated the methods of the latter. Disputes between Muslims and Christians constituted a distinct variety of literature. Some of these debates are associated with S. John of Damascus and his pupil Theodore Abū Qurrah (740-820). Theodore is credited with some disputes in

[42] One would suppose that a strict application of Mu'tazilite principles would demand a more, rather than a less, severe punishment for the backsliding Muslim.
[43] *Kitāb al-milal wa'n-niḥal*, ed. Cureton (1842-6) I 29 ff.
[44] We need not deal here with the "obscure and refined of the *kalām*" or "the subtleties of the *kalām*," which were in the main only an intellectual exercise indulged in both by the Mu'tazilah and by the Aš'arites. They did not become a source of binding doctrine.
[45] The Muslim Creed passim.
[46] "Christliche Polemik und islamische Dogmenbildung," Zeitschrift für Assyriologie 26 (1912) 175-195.

Arabic, which Graf considers spurious.[47] Nevertheless, the abundance of this kind of writing is evidence of the frequency of such arguments. In the *Apology* of al-Kindī we have an instance of the freedom the Christians sometimes permitted themselves. In the reign of al-Ma'mūn, to which this work belongs, discussions of this kind were encouraged. Such intercourse suggested the method, and to a degree the subject matter, of the *kalām*.

(b) We may illustrate Mu'tazilite doctrine with an example from each of the two principal divisions of their teaching. Obviously the most vital question with regard to "justice" is whether or not man's will is genuinely free. According to al-Aš'arī[48] there was only one Mu'tazilite who dissented from the sect's general view that God "does not create belief and disobedience, or any act of one not Himself," and he held that God created these things "in that He creates their names and their principles." Again, "the Mu'tazilah, except 'Abbād, agree that God appoints faith as good and unbelief as bad, and the meaning of this is that He appoints the name for faith and the principle that it is good," and similarly with unbelief, "and that God creates the unbeliever as not an unbeliever, then he disbelieves; and the believer in like manner. 'Abbād denied that God appointed unbelief in any way at all or created the unbeliever and the believer." This is sufficient to indicate how widely the Mu'tazilah differed from the orthodox on this crucial question.

Al-Aš'arī nobly summarizes the Mu'tazilite doctrine of God in these words:

> The Mu'tazilah agree that God is "one,"[49] "nought is There like Him;"[50] and He "is the hearing One, the seeing One,"[51] and is not a substance or an object or a body or a form or flesh or blood or a person or an essence or an accident; nor has He color or taste or odor or a pulse; nor has He heat or cold or moisture or dryness, or length or breadth or depth, or union or separation; nor does He move or rest; nor is He divided. He has not parts or atoms, or limbs or members; nor has He sides; nor has He right or left or front or back or above or below. He is not subject to the limitations of space or time. Contact and withdrawal are not possible for Him, nor descent upon this place or that. None of the predicates of creatures that prove their contingency is attributed to Him. Superlatives are not predicated of Him, nor measure, nor extension in various directions, nor is He defined. He is neither begetter nor begotten. The decrees do not embrace Him, nor do the screens veil Him. The senses do not attain to Him; nor is He to be compared with mankind, or likened to creatures in any way at all; nor do defects come upon Him; nor do diseases descend upon Him. Everything that is outlined in the mind or given form in thought is without resemblance to Him. He is eternally first, antecedent, prior to contingent beings, existent before created things. He is eternally knowing, powerful, living, and thus He continues. Eyes do not see Him, nor does sight attain to Him. Thought does not embrace Him, nor is He heard by the hearing—a Thing unlike things, knowing, powerful, living, unlike the knowers, the potentates, the livers, He is the eternal one alone, and there is no eternal one besides Him, and no god is there but He. "He hath no associate"[52] in His kingship, nor a vizier in His authority, nor a helper in the development of what He has developed or the creation of what He has created. He has not created the creation after an antecedent similitude, and the creation of one thing is not easier or more difficult for Him than the creation of another. The withholding of advantages is not possible for Him, and harm does not overtake Him; nor do joys or delights reach Him; nor does damage or suffering attain to Him. He is not finite. Coming to an end is not possible for Him, and weakness and loss do not overtake Him. He is too holy to embrace women or to possess wife and children.[53]

The relation between God and His predicates was an important question among the Mu'tazilah. God is qualified in the Qur'ān with a variety of "names," such as "the knowing," "the powerful," "the hearing," "the seeing." Taken at their face value, these adjectives imply the existence of the predicates of knowledge, power, and the rest. But is not God's unity destroyed by the introduction of eternal predicates? The Mu'tazilah, holding firmly to God's inflexible unity and complete otherness, could not admit these qualities unless they were shown to be indistinguishable from the divine essence, from God Himself. Al-Aš'arī probably puts the matter accurately when he says that most of the Mu'tazilah refer the predicates to God's Self; e. g., He is a knower by His own nature and not by knowledge.[54] 'Abbād, however, would not attach the predicates to God's essence; the use of the divine "names" meant for him only "the assertion of a name as belonging to God" and the knowledge of an effect corresponding to the name. Others would admit that God possessed predicates only in the sense that there are objects of the activities implied in the names. For some the names had only a negative validity; e. g., to say that God was a knower was simply to disclaim ignorance in His behalf. Still others endeavored to solve the

[47] G. Graf, Die arabischen Schriften des Theodor Abû Qurra (1910) 77 ff.
[48] *Maqālāt* 227, 228.
[49] Qur'ān 2. 158 and passim.
[50] Ibid. 42. 9.
[51] Ibid. 17. 1 and passim.

[52] Ibid. 6. 163.
[53] *Maqālāt* 155, 156. Cf. Wensinck's translation (The Muslim Creed 73 f.).
[54] *Maqālāt* 164 ff. Cf. ibid. 172, where they are said to believe that "the names and the predicates are expressions, and they are our saying 'God is knowing,' 'God is powerful,' and the like."

problem by reducing the number of predicates and identifying one with another.

So much for the predicates. What of their objects—the objects of God's knowledge, to choose a single group? Does God "know objects eternally, and are known things known before they exist, and do things exist eternally?"[55] Al-Aš'arī informs us that there were seven views among the Mu'tazilah with regard to this question. He grades them skilfully. They range from the teaching of Hišām ibn 'Amr, who would not grant that God was eternally a knower of things, for fear of compromising His unity, to that of Unayb, who is supposed to have spoken of things as "created in the predicates before existence" and "existent in the predicates."[56] The intermediate views belong to those who tried to solve the problem by distinguishing between the antecedent and the non-antecedent elements in objects.

(c) The views of al-Jubbā'ī, al-Aš'arī's master, as the latter reports them in the *Maqālāt*, do not form a complete system, but one must not overlook the probability that al-Aš'arī's mode of presentation tends to make them appear more fragmentary and disjointed than they really were.

For al-Jubbā'ī, as for the Mu'tazilah in general, God was transcendent. Although he declined to recognize an existence of things before their appearance in the world, he admitted God's eternal knowledge of things, substances, and accidents, as well as piety and impiety, because he could conceive of them apart from their phenomenal existence.[57] He also granted that one might speak of God as eternally "hearing" (*samī'*) and "seeing" (*baṣīr*), but denied that He was eternally a "hearer" (*sāmi'*) or a "person who sees" (*mubṣir*).[58] This is not wholly an idle distinction. The former two words are adjectives, while the latter are participles, and participles are often employed as substantives. God may be described as "hearing" and "seeing" independently of objects of hearing and sight. However, when we say He is a "hearer" and a "seer" we imply that He actually hears and sees things. Al-Jubbā'ī had no objection to the use of the participle so long as there was no assertion that God performed eternally the action in question. For example, he held that "God is a *muḥbil* (one who causes pregnancy) when He creates pregnancy"[59]—but only, of course, in the temporal world. God is capable of any act of which He makes man capable.[60]

Al-Jubbā'ī's statements concerning God's predicates were designed to

[55] *Maqālāt* 158.
[56] Ibid. 163.
[57] Ibid. 160-162. Cf. 522 ff., 526 ff.
[58] Ibid. 175, 176. Cf. 492, 493.
[59] Ibid. 194, 195.
[60] Ibid. 199, 200. Cf. 551.

be negatively valid.[61] They were therefore not pressed beyond the point where their value ended. When there was no longer danger of a misconception he was willing to let the matter rest. From this point of view it was not necessary to subject all the predicates to the same logical treatment. Thus, when one affirms that God is "in eternity other than a speaker of truth," somebody may be misled into concluding that God is a liar,[62] and for this reason one must further maintain that God is in eternity other than a liar. One must use the same method in dealing with the attributes of justice and reason, but creation and provision are predicates of a different sort and the statement that God is "in eternity other than a creator, a provider" carries with it no risk of misunderstanding, since presumably God is under no compulsion to create or provide. God and man are both creators, for God makes things predetermined, and man performs predetermined acts.[63] The meaning seems to be that in each case predetermination precedes the act and therefore he who performs the act is a creator, since, whether he is God or man, he does a predetermined thing.

God's foreknowledge of events does not preclude doubts on man's part[64] as to these events nor is man entirely bound by God's foreknowledge, since "if somebody God had known would not believe had believed, God would have admitted him to Paradise."[65] Yet when God adds revelation to foreknowledge events must take place as God has foreknown and revealed them and it is impious to entertain doubts of any sort. Al-Jubbā'ī was a more rigid determinist than the rest of the Mu'tazilah. He saw a connection between man's ability to act (*quwwah*) and his action, but he held that the ability was not "put to use" in action.[66] According to his view a definite quantity of ability is required for each act and that quantity does not suffice for the performance of further acts, for, if it did, there would be no limit to what man could do.[67] Still, God's grace (*tawfīq*) is given to believers and unbelievers alike, even though the latter reject it.[68] It remains grace even when it has no effect upon the soul. Al-Jubbā'ī dissented from the position of his fellow Mu'tazilah in regarding it as possible for God to forgive one man a sin and punish another for a similar sin.[69]

Faith embraces all the obligations God has imposed upon His servants.[70] It does not include acts of supererogation. In his attempt to

[61] Ibid. 176.
[62] Ibid. 179, 187.
[63] Ibid. 195.
[64] Ibid. 206.
[65] Ibid. 204. Cf. 560, 575.
[66] Ibid. 235.
[67] Ibid. 241.
[68] Ibid. 263.
[69] Ibid. 276.
[70] Ibid. 269.

determine whether or not a reprobate (*fāsiq*) was still a believer al-Jubbā'ī made a distinction between the sense a word has in classical Arabic and its religious meaning. According to the former, a man who has once believed is always a believer, and even the Jew has sufficient faith to entitle him to be called a believer and a Muslim, but religion does not allow us to use the word "believer" of one who no longer believes.

Some sins are mortal, others venial.[71] If a man avoids grave sins he escapes punishment for his light sins, but a mortal sin destroys the hope of salvation. The intention of committing a sin is equivalent to the sin itself. Lest men take the presumptuous view that they may indulge in venial sins with impunity, al-Jubbā'ī teaches that a number of such sins may, when taken together, be as grievous as a mortal sin. The theft of a single dirham is a venial sin, while the theft of five dirhams is a mortal sin. If a man steals five dirhams one by one he has committed a mortal sin, because the five thefts, although each in itself is light, are grave in their totality. Al-Jubbā'ī is more difficult to follow when he adds the effects of intentions to those of acts, as he does in an interesting passage.[72] Here he tells us that if a man makes up his mind to take one and two-thirds dirhams at some future time and when the time comes wills to steal and steals, he takes three times one and two-thirds dirhams, or five dirhams.[73]

This digest of al-Jubbā'ī's opinions seems to warrant our placing him in the right wing of the Muʻtazilite movement. It will be necessary to return to him later in our discussion of the training and conversion of his renowned pupil.

It was not among irreverent *zindīqs* (dualists, atheists) or *mulḥids* (enemies of religion) that the Muʻtazilite movement began, but among persons of uncommon piety. In Islām the Muʻtazilah were called "the people of justice and unity," "the people of the promise and the threat." European writers have applied the names "free thinkers" and "rationalists" to them. Such designations are hardly admissible without considerable reservation and qualification. To be sure, reason was accorded a very high place by the Muʻtazilah, and in bringing their doctrine of God into line with its requirements they were running counter to Islām as it had come from the hand of the Prophet and as it was received and believed by the simple. But at their best they were broad churchmen, who tried to make peace between revelation and reason and maintained the unity

[71] Ibid. 270, 272. [72] Ibid. 273.

[73] This would seem to indicate that, in al-Jubbā'ī's opinion, a person taking this sum was liable to the punishment of the amputation of the hand. Muslim authorities disagree as to how much a man must steal to incur this punishment.

of God and His justice in this world and the next against what really seemed to them unworthy beliefs. There were Muʻtazilites and Muʻtazilites. The *Miḥnah*, or test, illustrates one of the least admirable aspects of the movement. It was a systematic attempt to impose the doctrine of the createdness of the Qur'ān by means of a sort of holy office. It lasted from A. H. 218 to 234, beginning in the last year of al-Ma'mūn's caliphate, extending through the reigns of al-Muʻtaṣim and al-Wāṯiq, and ending under al-Mutawakkil. It was only the founder of the *Miḥnah* who cared greatly for the end he hoped to achieve by it. The test was carried on by al-Muʻtaṣim and al-Wāṯiq without great enthusiasm, and the latter is even said to have given up the doctrine of a created Qur'ān. It was under al-Muʻtaṣim that Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal was tried and took an adamantine stand against the heretical dogma. The *Miḥnah*, particularly in its first stages, caught many teachers unprepared, both spiritually and intellectually. The unfortunate complaisance shown by some at the very start was responsible, to Aḥmad's thinking, for the continuation and partial success of the test. Neither al-Ma'mūn nor his inquisitor, Aḥmad ibn Abī Duwād, was a person of high calibre of soul. They despised what they regarded as the superstition of the many, and they did not carry out their programme, as Aḥmad did his opposition to it, with prayer and fasting. It was an ill-advised effort to coerce the people into accepting a highbrow point of view. By making martyrs and confessors it simply frustrated its own purpose and gave additional vitality to the opposite belief.

Surely, if we compare thinkers like al-Maʻarrī,[74] al-Jāḥiẓ, and Ibn ar-Rawandī with moderate Muʻtazilites, we are compelled to grant that the two groups are widely different both in spirit and in actual doctrine. Al-Ḫayyāṭ charges Ibn ar-Rawandī, against whom his *Kitāb al-intiṣār* is directed, with holding the following beliefs:[75] that matter is eternal; that God's wisdom is disproved by the fact that He afflicts men and commands obedience that He knows will not be rendered; that eternal punishment is disproportionate to the guilt of human sin; that the Qur'ān contains error; that prophets are guilty of false miracles; and that the Emigrants and the Helpers declined to accept the caliph designated by the Apostle.

The author is plainly eager to clear his party of charges of unorthodoxy. This is obvious in his statement of the Muʻtazilite creed, already quoted. Besides, he points out that certain matters of which the Muʻtazilah have treated are of "the obscure and refined of the *kalām*,"

[74] See Nicholson, Studies in Islamic Poetry (1921) passim.

[75] Op. cit. 2, 3.

and that their discussions are not sources of doctrine, but only attempts to solve speculative difficulties. Abu 'l-Hudayl regretted having engaged in this sort of *kalām*. Al-Ḫayyāṭ boasts that only the Muʻtazilah distinguish between this and the other sort of *kalām*, which aims at enunciating doctrine.[76]

There is a great difference, of course, between the tenor of al-Ma'mūn's letters early in the course of the *Miḥnah* and the relatively chastened apology of al-Ḫayyāṭ. The one hopes that his views may prevail in Islām, the other knows that he and his fellows represent only one of many points of view, and is intent simply upon establishing the good character of his sect. Nevertheless, the general impression of the Muʻtazilah one gains is that they served both their masters, reason and revelation, with such fidelity as they could command. They were not relentless in their use of reason. Yet, once their method and doctrines were established, they closed their minds and settled down to their own sort of conservatism.

This desire on the part of the Muʻtazilah to make religion reasonable, however strongly we may approve it, took no account of the real nature of Islām, or indeed, of religion in general. Religion is either irrational or suprarational. It must vindicate its supernatural character if it is to continue as religion, and not suffer transformation into something else. Reason cannot dictate belief; it can only support it once the truth of revelation has been granted. Islām finally settled down to the acceptance of reason in the latter capacity, and, once admitted, reason took a firm hold on theology. Prof Wensinck says, "Theology, once having called *kalam* to its aid, ends in a state of utter dependence on its benefactor. Al Sanusi's short catechism deduces God and His qualities, the universe, the Prophets and their mission, as well as the last things, from a simple logical premise." [77] If this is true, it may be asked why the Muʻtazilah failed to effect the introduction of reason into theology. Several reasons may be suggested: the tactics of the *Miḥnah*, the intellectualism and aloofness of the Muʻtazilah, their lack of cohesion and numerous internal difficulties. Undoubtedly the position of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal was nearer the heart of Islām. His piety and obscurantism commanded more veneration than the brilliant dialectics of the Muʻtazilah. "I am no master of the *kalām*," he declared. The Qur'ān and the Tradition were enough for him and he took what they said "*bilā kayfa*" "without further inquiry." To what is essentially the same point of view various groups have since returned, and it seems to possess a curious power to renew and invigorate Islām.

[76] Ibid. 13. Cf. 50.

[77] The Muslim Creed 248.

III.

AL-AŠʻARĪ AND HIS THEOLOGY

Ibn Ḫallikān, in his bare account of al-Ašʻarī's life, makes his subject's fame an excuse for the brevity of his sketch.[78] The significance of al-Ašʻarī's achievement made him perhaps more a symbol than a person in the minds of his successors, who, while maintaining stoutly that he had not given rise to a new school in Islām, were nevertheless well aware that his skilful fusion of clashing forces had been in reality a fresh point of departure for theology. His title to renown is based mainly not upon eminent spirituality or the invention, on his part, of anything radically new in the domain of religion, but upon his discovery of a middle intellectual ground for orthodoxy, and upon his foundation of a school in whose hands the *kalām*, largely suspect until his time, became the method of the speculative theologians of Islām. The man is thus obscured by his work and its effects. He left behind no confessions, like his brilliant successor al-Ġazālī. Virtually all his writings are polemical, either directly or incidentally, and their often crabbed language discloses little of the author's personal life. We know him, from his own books, only in this crusading mood or in the dispassionate, analytical temper he displays in his great digest of the sects. No doubt he was predominantly an extravert. His good voice and his genius for argument, as well as the animus against heretics that, if tradition speaks truly, continued with him to the end, must have made the world outside a matter of more constant concern to him than the world within. Yet his devotion was remembered,[79] as well as his competence in theology and law,[80] and his frugality [81] was too marked to be forgotten. Perhaps he hid behind a genial [82] and urbane manner the traces of many a deep spiritual experience, but he seems never to have written about his soul, for the record of the decisive struggle that transferred him to the camp

[78] Tr. de Slane (1842-71) II 227, 228. The most important source is the ***Kitāb tabyīn kiḏb al-muftarī fi ma nasaba ila'l-imām Abi'l-Ḥasan al-Ašʻarī*** by Ibn ʻAsākir (A. H. 499-571), a defence of the great kalāmist against the slanders levelled at him by the Muʻtazilite Abū ʻAlī of Damascus. See Bibliography. See also as-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt* II 245 ff. (based largely on Ibn ʻAsākir, whose work underlies all later accounts); al-Ḫaṭīb al-Baġdādī, *Ta'rīḫ Baġdād* XI 346, 347; as-Samʻānī, *Kitāb al-ansāb* 39a; al-Ḫwānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt* 474-476. All the facts of al-Ašʻarī's life will be found concisely set down in Spitta's book.

[79] As-Subkī 247. Spitta, op. cit. 16.

[80] As-Subkī 249.

[81] Ibid. 248. He lived modestly on the income of an estate left by Bilāl.

[82] Ibid. 247.

of the orthodox after a long youth spent in the ranks of the Mu'tazilah survives only in traditions about his disputes with his master al-Jubbā'ī, his visions of the Prophet, his fifteen days' retreat, and the striking declaration of his reconversion to the Sunnite position. This *volte-face*, however, was genuine, the calumnies of the Mu'tazilah notwithstanding.

Al-Aš'arī's background was a compelling factor in his life. He was the scion of a long line of aristocrats in Islām,[83] who traced their ancestry to Abū Mūsā, reputed to have been a Refugee and a man dear to the heart of the Prophet. This person and his son and grandson, Abū Burdah and Bilāl, attained to eminence as office-holders in church and state. Abū Mūsā himself was an opportunist, and, as we have seen, he played a discreditable part in the arbitration between 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah.[84] It was an efficient, self-interested race, proud of its Arab blood, pure diction, and eloquence. These traits descended to al-Aš'arī, and, like Bilāl,[85] he could be supercilious towards those who were not so conversant with the ancestral tongue as he pretended to be. Often in the *Ibānah* he argues from the usage of the pure Arabic. A story is told of a dispute he had with al-Jubbā'ī, who had been asked whether God might be called intelligent (*'āqil*) and had answered in the negative, contending that "intelligence" (*'aql*) was derived from "halter" (*'iqāl*) and that the halter restrained, and because restraint was impossible with respect to the reality of God, the expression was prohibited. Al-Aš'arī replied, "According to your analogy, God may not be called 'wise' (*ḥakīm*) because this name is derived from the 'ring' (*ḥakamah*) of the bridle, which is the iron instrument used to prevent a beast from escaping." He then quoted verses in support of his position.[86]

Al-Aš'arī was born in Baṣrah, A. H. 260 (A. D. 873).[87] Although reared, one infers, in Sunnite circles, he yielded at a very early age to the attractions of the Mu'tazilite school and continued in it, as the pupil of al-Jubbā'ī (A. H. 235-303), until he was forty years old. He was profoundly attached to the Mu'tazilah by years of association and had become prominent among them, often substituting in public discussions for his master, whose gift was for writing rather than for rough and ready disputation. The exhibition of his talents must have afforded al-Aš'arī much pleasure as well as constant occupation. What first threw

[83] They were rigid Sunnites, but there was a Šī'ite *'ālim* named Abū Ja'far al-Aš'arī (*Fihrist*, ed. Flügel 222).

[84] Aš-Šahrastānī represents Abū Mūsā as defending the *qadar* against 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ! (*Kitāb al-milal wa'n-niḥal* 66).

[85] Spitta, op. cit. 30 ff.

[86] As-Subkī 251. Cf. *Maqālāt* 526.

[87] On the dates of his birth and death see Spitta, op. cit. 36, 37, 115, 146; Mehren, "Exposé" 183, 200.

him off his balance it is impossible to say. Very likely it was his recognition that al-Jubbā'ī's arguments were inadequate, for the master was not a remarkable thinker. One group of stories makes his defection the result of an unsatisfactory answer given him by al-Jubbā'ī.[88] The version given by as-Subkī runs as follows: "The Sheikh (al-Aš'arī) asked Abū 'Alī (al-Jubbā'ī), 'O sheikh, what have you to say about three persons, one a believer, another an unbeliever, and the third an infant.' He replied, 'The believer is among the glorified, the unbeliever among those who perish, and the infant among those who are safe.' The Sheikh answered, 'If the infant wills to rise to a place among the glorified, can he do so?' Al-Jubbā'ī said, 'No; it will be said to him, "The believer achieved this grade of glory only by obedience, and you have nothing of the sort."' The Sheikh said, 'Then if he says, "The deficiency is no fault of mine, and therefore if Thou hadst suffered me to live, I would have rendered obedience like the believer"—what?' Al-Jubbā'ī said, 'God will say to him, "I knew that if you survived you would surely be disobedient and incur punishment, wherefore I considered what was best for you and brought death upon you before you reached the age of responsibility."' The Sheikh said, 'Then, if the unbeliever says, "O my Lord, Thou didst know his condition as Thou knewest mine; therefore why didst Thou not consider also what was best for me?"—what?' Then al-Jubbā'ī was nonplussed."[89]

The Mu'tazilah were firmly convinced that God would do only what was best (*maṣlaḥah* "welfare") for each soul. Al-Aš'arī had discovered a flaw in this doctrine. Probably he questioned other Mu'tazilite dogmas as well. At any rate, in A. H. 300, during the month of Ramaḍān, he had three visions of the Prophet.[90] In the first Muḥammad said to him, "O 'Alī, give your support to the opinions related on my authority, for they are the reality." Al-Aš'arī thought long and hard about this. The Prophet came again and asked, "What have you done concerning the thing about which I commanded you?" Al-Aš'arī replied, "I have done what I could, for I have found some support for the opinions related on your authority." Muḥammad said, "Give your support to the opinions related on my authority, for they are the reality." Al-Aš'arī then resolved to give up the *kalām* and devoted himself assiduously to the Qur'ān and to tradition. On the twenty-seventh of the month, forced by drowsiness to give up his vigil, al-Aš'arī had a third vision, in which Muḥammad again asked what he had done to fulfil the command laid upon him. This time al-Aš'arī announced that he had forsaken the *kalām* and

[88] Spitta, op. cit. 41 ff.

[89] As-Subkī 250, 251.

[90] Spitta, op. cit. 47 ff. As-Subkī 246.

studied only the Book and the *sunnah.* The Prophet replied that this was not what he had ordered him to do. Then al-Aš'arī protested that he could not relinquish views he had held thirty years. Muḥammad promised him God's aid, and when al-Aš'arī waked up he began a new life. "Everything besides truth is error," he said, and commenced at once to adore what he had burned and to burn what he had adored.

Another story [91] tells of his retirement at home for fiftten days and his return to public life in a new character. He climbed into the pulpit of the mosque and solemnly announced the change God had effected in him. It was characteristic of him to make the most of such an opportunity.

These traditions indicate that al-Aš'arī suffered a short period of acute perplexity and tension, which in all likelihood had been preceded by a much longer phase of discontent and uneasiness. Once assurance came he resumed his old occupation—but with a different purpose. Henceforth he was untiring in his contest with heresy. There are anecdotes about his cleverness in dispute and his knowledge of the law as well as of theology. He was identified with the *maḏhab* (school) of aš-Šāfi'ī, and, while resident in Baġdād, attended the lectures of the Šāfi'ite *faqīh* (legal expert) Abū Isḥāq al-Marwazī [92] in the mosque of Manṣūr. As-Subkī emphatically denies that he was a Mālikī. Al-Aš'arī's school had some difficulties with the Ḥanbalites, and the Sheikh himself, perhaps because he realized the desirability of avoiding a quarrel with them, registers himself in the *Ibānah* as a follower of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. However, this was not simply a gesture, for in his reversion to the Qur'ān and the *sunnah*, and in his frequent use of "*bilā kayfa*," [93] he approximated Aḥmad's position, so far as the latter went. Nevertheless, Aḥmad, who could condemn the *kalām* even when he had to admit that the conclusions to which it led were unexceptionable,[94] would not have gone the whole way with al-Aš'arī.

At some time in the latter part of his life Abu 'l-Ḥasan moved to Baġdād, where he died in A. H. 324 (A. D. 935). He was buried, fittingly enough, near Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal.

Despite his preference for verbal argument, al-Aš'arī wrote many books.[95] A number given by several authorities is fifty-five. The *Fihrist* assigns him only six. His own school knew apparently of three hundred, more or less, and of these Ibn 'Asākir mentions ninety-nine. Besides letters, monographs, and refutations of individual heretics, he wrote commentaries on the Qur'ān and works on tradition, dogma, and heresy.

[91] Spitta, op. cit. 49 f. As-Subkī 246.
[92] D. 951.
[93] This convenient and essentially meaningless phrase was in common use.
[94] Patton, op. cit. 32, 33.
[95] Spitta, op. cit. 61 ff.

some of them of considerable bulk. Of his writings, the following seven are now known to exist: [96]

(1) The *Ibānah.* There are two printed editions, published respectively at Hyderabad (A. H. 1321) [97] and Cairo (A. H. 1348).[98] Translations of portions of this work by Spitta,[99] Mehren,[100] and Macdonald [101] are referred to below. Goldziher [102] and Wensinck [103] have translated small portions of the *Ibānah.* The work is highly combative in tone. In the present state of knowledge, it seems impossible to assign it a precise date. In any case, it must have been written after the author's conversion in A. H. 300. In it al-Aš'arī displays a very high degree of forensic genius. The following pages afford so many illustrations of his acumen that no elaborate discussion of it is necessary here. The book, while containing an adequate statement of al-Aš'arī's theological position, is not a systematic treatise so much as an arsenal of arguments, capable of use as a manual of telling replies to the unorthodox.

(2) Among the works attributed to al-Aš'arī is the *Risālah fī' stiḥsān al-ḫawḍ fī 'l-kalām*—or "Tract in Favor of the Free Use of the *kalām*"—a reasoned justification of the *kalām* as a method of arriving at truth.[104] In it the author tells of a certain party of obscurantists—perhaps the Ḥanbalites—who will have nothing to do with inquiry into the roots of Islām, and "think that the *kalām* concerning motion, rest, substance, accidents, essences, external forms, atoms, the *ṭafrah*, and the attributes of the Creator" is error, on the ground that the Prophet said nothing about these things. The author replies with three lines of argument: (1) the *kalām* is not explicitly condemned; (2) the roots of these things are to be found in the Qur'ān and the *sunnah*; (3) "the Apostle of God knew these questions . . . , but they did not arise in specific form in his time." This tractate is more likely from the hand of an Aš'arite than from al-Aš'arī's own.

(3) The *Kitāb al-luma'* or "Book of Aphorisms." Spitta (op. cit. 83, 84) summarizes its contents. There are ten chapters, dealing respectively with the Qur'ān, God's will, His visibility, the *qadar*, the *istiṭā'ah*, the *ta'dīl* and the *tajwīr* ("accounting just" and "accounting unjust"),

[96] H. Ritter in Der Islam 18 (1929) 40. Brockelmann, Geschichte der arabischen Literatur (1898) I 195; Supplementband I (1937) 345-6.
[97] In the *Kitāb šarḥ al-fiqh al-akbar.*
[98] The Hyderabad text is indicated, in the notes to the present version, by the symbol *H*, the Cairo text by *E*.
[99] See below, 43.
[100] See below, 43.
[101] See below, 49.
[102] Vorlesungen über den Islam (1925) 119 ff.
[103] The Muslim Creed 88 ff.
[104] Translation in M. Horten, Die philosophischen Systeme der spekulativen Theologen im Islam (1912) 623 ff.

faith, the particular and the universal, the promise and the threat, and the imāmate. The third chapter, on the divine will, has been translated into German by Joseph Hell.[105]

(4) The *Risālat al-īmān,* a tract on faith. Spitta (op. cit. 101-104) presents a translation of this work, in which al-Aš'arī defends the uncreatedness of faith.

(5) The *Risālah kataba bihā ilā ahl at̲-tag̲r bi bāb al-abwāb.* (Cf. Spitta, op. cit. 81).[106]

(6) The *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn.* This work "contains (a) a heresiology, (b) the orthodox creed, (c) different opinions on philosophical questions—a division which is identical with that of the chief work of John of Damascus, though the arrangement is different in that in John's *Foundation* (sic) *of Knowledge* (the title of the tripartite work) the logical part forms the introduction to the other two." [107]

Quotations from and references to the *Maqālāt* occur throughout the present work. It is mature and objective and one is inclined to suppose that it was written during al-Aš'arī's last years in Bag̲dād,[108] rather than during the long period when he was engaged with heretics of one sort or another—if, to be sure, we are entitled to conclude that he ever gave up this sort of work. Whenever it was written, it is certainly the earliest and in many respects the best work of its kind, and I have therefore not scrupled to quote from it generously.

(7) The *Qawl jumlat aṣḥāb al-ḥadīt̲ wa ahl as-sunnah fi 'l-i'tiqād* (Brockelmann, Supplementband I 345).

And now, what of al-Aš'arī's theology? In retrospect, he assumes the appearance of an accomplished intellectual diplomatist, who drafted the *kalām* into the service of orthodoxy, took a mean position—halfway between rationalism and anthropomorphism—, and paved the way for the subsequent rationalization and intellectualization of Islām. Up to this point we have accepted posterity's view of him. But the al-Aš'arī of the *Ibānah* and the creed in the *Maqālāt* [109] does not answer to such a description. He is simply a disciple of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal's, without the latter's prejudice against the *kalām.* On the one hand, his is not the first effort to use the *kalām* for orthodox purposes: and on the other hand, he cannot be held wholly responsible for the alterations it under-

[105] Von Mohammed bis Ghazâlî (1923) 49-59.

[106] I regret that Qiwāmeddīn's edition of this work, mentioned by Ritter, is not accessible to me.

[107] Wensinck, The Muslim Creed 87.

[108] It was not written before A. H. 291 (Ritter in the Introduction to the *Maqālāt* 15).

[109] *Maqālāt* 290-297.

went in his school. He himself is an enigma, from a literary point of view, and so long as we have no precise knowledge of the chronological order of his writings—nor, indeed, any assurance that all the works ascribed to him are really his own—we cannot be certain of the course of development his theology followed, if in reality it suffered any remarkable change between the first few years after his conversion and the last years of his life. In view of these considerations, the present essay will confine itself, in its résumé of al-Aš'arī's doctrine, to the *Ibānah* and the creed. The latter reads as follows:

> I. The substance of that upon which the Sunnites take their stand is the confession of God, His angels, His books, His apostles, the revelation of God, and the Tradition of the trustworthy on the authority of God's Apostle; and they do not reject any of those things. God is one God, single, eternal. There is no god besides Him. He has neither wife nor children. Muḥammad is His servant and Apostle. Paradise is a reality, and Hell is a reality. There is no doubt about the Coming Hour, and God will effect a resurrection from the graves.
>
> II. God is upon His throne, as He has said, "The Merciful is seated on The Throne." [110] He has two hands, *bilā kayfa,* as He has said, "I have created with My two hands," [111] and as He has said, "Nay! outstretched are both His hands;" [112] and He has two eyes, *bilā kayfa,* as He has said, "Under Our eyes it floated on;" [113] and He has a face, as He has said, "And the face of thy Lord shall abide resplendent with majesty and glory." [114]
>
> III. It is not to be said that the names of God are anything but Himself, as the Mu'tazilah and the H̲ārijites believe. The Sunnites confess that God has knowledge, as He has said, "In His knowledge He sent it down," [115] and as He has said, "And no female conceiveth or bringeth forth without His knowledge." [116]
>
> IV. They assert the existence of His hearing and sight; and they do not deny that those things belong to God, as the Mu'tazilah do. They assert that God has prowess (*quwwah*), as He has said, "Saw they not that God Who created them was mightier than they in prowess?" [117]
>
> V. They believe that there is no good or evil on earth, except what God wishes; and that things are by the wish of God, as He has said, "But wish it ye shall not, unless as God wisheth it," [118] and as the Muslims say, "What God wishes is, and what He does not wish is not."
>
> VI. They believe that nobody has the capacity to do a thing before he does it; and that nobody is capable of quitting the sphere

[110] Qur'ān 20. 4.
[111] Ibid. 38. 75.
[112] Ibid. 5. 69.
[113] Ibid. 54. 14.
[114] Ibid. 55. 27.
[115] Ibid. 4. 164.
[116] Ibid. 35. 12.
[117] Ibid. 41. 14.
[118] Ibid. 81. 29.

of God's knowledge, or of doing anything God knows he will not do. They confess that there is no creator save God; and that God creates the works of human beings; and that human beings are not capable of creating anything.

VII. God gives the faithful grace to be obedient to Him and deserts the infidels. He favors the faithful, helps them, does what is salutary for them, and guides them; but He does not favor the infidels, nor does He do what is salutary for them or guide them. If He did what was salutary for them they would be sound; and if He guided them, they would be guided. God is capable of doing what is salutary for the infidels and favoring them so that they may become believers; nevertheless He wills not to do what is salutary for the infidels, and not to favor them so that they may become believers, but wills them to be infidels, as He knows, and deserts them and misguides them and seals their hearts. Good and evil depend upon the general and particular decrees of God. They believe in God's general and particular decrees, and His good and evil, His sweet and bitter. They believe that they are not their own masters for weal or for woe, save as God wishes, as He has said. They commit their affairs to God, and assert their need of God at all times and their dependence upon God under all circumstances.

VIII. They believe that the Qur'ān is the uncreated Word of God. As for the *kalām* concerning the neutral position (*waqf*) [119] and the utterance,[120] those who discuss the utterance and the neutral position are innovators according to them. It is not to be said that the utterance of the Qur'ān is created, or that it is uncreated.

IX. They believe that God will be beheld by sight on the day of resurrection: as the moon is beheld on the night it is full shall the faithful behold Him; but the infidels shall not behold Him, because they will be veiled from God. God has said, "Yea, they shall be shut out as by a veil from their Lord on that day." [121] Moses asked God for the sight of Him in this world, and God manifested Himself to the mountain and turned it to dust, and so taught Moses that he should not see Him in this world, but should see Him in the next world.

X. They do not brand any of the people of the *qiblah* an infidel for any grave sin he may commit, such as fornication, or theft, or any such grave sin; but hold that they are believers to the extent to which they have faith, even though they commit grave sins. Faith, according to them, is faith in God, His angels, His books, His apostles, and in the *qadar*, its good and its evil, its sweet and its bitter. What misses them was not to befall them, and what befalls them was not to miss them. Islām is bearing witness that there is no God but

[119] See below, 80 and Goldziher, op. cit. 328. Some persons declined to take either side in the controversy on the Qur'ān, and this position was known as the *waqf*.

[120] See below, 81.

[121] Qur'ān 83. 15.

God and Muḥammad is God's Apostle,[122] according to what the traditions say; and Islām, according to them, is not the same thing as faith.

XI. They confess that God changes men's hearts.

XII. They confess the intercession of God's Apostle, and believe that it is for the grave sinners of his people and for the punishment of the grave. They confess that the Pool is a reality, and the Bridge is a reality, and the resurrection after death is a reality, and God's settlement of His account with human beings is a reality, and the standing in God's presence is a reality.

XIII. They confess that faith is word and deed, subject to increase and decrease, and they do not call it created or uncreated.[123] They say, "The names of God are God." They do not relegate any mortal sinner to Hell, and they do not assign any of the unitarians to Paradise, but wait for God to send them where He wishes. They say, "Their lot is in God's hands; if He wishes He will punish them, and if He wishes He will forgive them." They believe that God will take certain of the unitarians out of Hell, according to what is stated in the traditions related on the authority of God's Apostle. They discountenance arguments and quarrels concerning Islām, and contentions concerning the *qadar*, and discussions concerning such religious questions as the disputers discuss and wrangle about, in agreement with the sound traditions and with the content of the *āṯār*,[124] which the trustworthy have related, one just man on the authority of another, back to God's Apostle. They do not say how or why, because that is innovation.

XIV. They believe that God does not command evil, but forbids it; and that He commands good; and that He has no pleasure in evil, even though He wills it.

XV. They recognize the reality of the men of old, whom God elected to be the Companions of His Prophet, and they cherish their virtues and keep clear of what is disputed among them, be it small or great. They give priority to Abū Bakr, then 'Umar, then 'Uṯmān, then 'Alī, and confess that they are the rightly guiding, rightly guided caliphs, the best of all men next to the Prophet.

XVI. They ratify the traditions that are related on the authority of God's Apostle to the effect that God descends to the lower heaven and says, "Who seeks forgiveness?," as the tradition is related on the authority of God's Apostle. They hold fast to the Book and the *sunnah*, as God has said, "If in aught ye differ, bring it to God and

[122] Here is the *šahādah* (brief statement of belief) in its final form. The five "pillars of Islam" are not enumerated as such either here or in the *Ibānah*.

[123] Al-Aš'arī does, however, call it created in his tract on the subject, if the latter is genuine.

[124] The *āṯār* are traditions handed down from the Companions. The *aḫbār* are traditions that come from the Prophet.

the Apostle,"[125] and they approve loyalty to the past *imāms* of Islām, and agree that they ought not to introduce into their religion novelties that God does not permit.

XVII. They confess that God will bring the dead to life on the day of resurrection, as He has said, "And thy Lord shall come and the angels rank on rank;"[126] and that God is near His creatures, as He wishes, even as He has said, "We are nearer to him than his neck vein."[127]

XVIII. They approve the Feast, and the Friday Assembly, and gatherings for prayer, under the leadership of any *imām*, pious or dissolute. They receive the wiping of the sandals as a *sunnah* and approve it at home and in travel. They believe in the precept of the *jihād*[128] against the polytheists, from the time God sent His Prophet to the last of the band that will fight against Antichrist, and thereafter.

XIX. They approve prayer for the welfare of the *imāms* of the Muslims, and agree that they ought not to "go out" against them with the sword, and that they ought not to fight in civil commotions (*fitnah*). They believe that Antichrist will go forth, and that 'Īsā ibn Maryam will slay him.

XX. They believe in Munkar and Nakīr, and the Ascension, and visions in sleep, and hold that prayer for the Muslim dead and alms in their behalf after their decease avail for them.

XXI. They believe that there is witchcraft in the world, and that the wizard is an infidel, as God says, and that sorcery is actually in existence in the world.

XXII. They approve prayer for every departed person of the people of the *qiblah*, pious or dissolute, and recognize that one may inherit from them.

XXIII. They confess that Paradise and Hell are created;

XXIV. And that he who dies, dies at his appointed term, and likewise he who is slain, is slain at his appointed term;

XXV. And that God bestows His sustenance upon His servants, be it lawful or prohibited; and that Satan whispers to men, and makes them doubt, and tramples upon them;

XXVI. And that God may give to the righteous particularly the signs that appear to them.

XXVII. And that the *sunnah* is not abrogated by the Qur'ān;[129]

XXVIII. And that the lot of infants is in the hands of God: if He wishes, He punishes them, and if He wishes, He does with them what He wills;

[125] Qur'ān 4. 62.

[126] Ibid. 89. 23.

[127] Ibid. 50. 15.

[128] Wensinck, op. cit. 27.

[129] Lammens, Islam, Beliefs and Institutions, tr. Ross (1929) 65 ff.

XXIX. And that God knows what human beings do and has written that these things shall be; and that things are in the hand of God. They approve patience in the face of what God has ordained, and holding fast to what God has commanded, and refusing what God has refused, and purity of manners, and sincere counsel to the Muslims. They believe in the service of God in His servants, and sincere counsel to the congregation of the Muslims, and the avoidance of grave sins, fornication, perjury, party spirit, vainglory, self-esteem, condemnation of men, and pride.

XXX. They approve the avoidance of everyone who summons to innovation; and diligence in the reading of the Qur'ān, and the writing of the *āṯār*, and legal research with humility and restraint and urbanity; and devotion to what is known, and the shunning of what is injurious; and the abandonment of mysteries, slander, evil speaking, and too great anxiety about food and drink.

XXXI. This, then, is the substance of what they command and use and approve; and we hold all the beliefs of theirs we have mentioned and adopt them as our views. Our grace is but by God, and He is our sufficiency. How excellent is His agent! In God do we seek help, in Him do we trust, and to Him is the return.

In the last paragraph of this formulary, the Sheikh subscribes to all it contains, and identifies himself completely with the Sunnite position. His claim to be regarded as a Sunnite is advanced in all sincerity, and its validity must be allowed. Al-Aš'arī is as much a conservative and a traditionist as Aḥmad; but he has a far more acute mind, and cannot be satisfied with Aḥmad's obscurantism. He accepts a multitude of doctrines and practices, primarily, if not solely, upon the authority of tradition. Several times, in the *Ibānah*, he quotes a number of traditions in confirmation of a position already established by argument. These components of his theological and disciplinary system (he is at no pains to separate doctrine and discipline in his formularies) need not claim our attention very long at this point; the notes below cast sufficient light on their background to enable the reader to see how much al-Aš'arī accepted from the past. From Aḥmad comes his doctrine of the Qur'ān, and he is quite as rigid as Aḥmad in his condemnation of innovating discussions regarding it. In the *Ibānah* he lays down principles for its interpretation: God addresses the Arabs only in their classical language, and the usage of the latter is decisive; the Book does not contradict itself; it is to be construed literally, except by proof, and a particular meaning is to be given it only by *ijmā'* and by proof. The Qur'ān, for him as for Aḥmad, is the eternal, uncreated Word of God—a predicate of God's, like His knowledge.

"The names of God are God." His predicates are eternal; they exist eternally in God. But what of the divine face, hands, eyes mentioned in

the Qur'ān? Here, as in the case of the predicates strictly so-called, one must steer a middle course between *taʻṭīl*, stripping God of His attributes, and *tanzīh*, declining to recognize in Him any resemblance to the created world, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, *tašbīh*, making God too closely like His creatures, and *tajsīm*, clothing Him with a body like ours. "*Bilā kayfa*" is the magic form of words; and it proves nothing, except that God's face, hands, etc. are neither to be explained figuratively nor to be regarded as similar to our own corresponding members. Yet when he discusses God's being seated on the Throne, al-Ašʻarī, in his eagerness to prove that the Throne is in a definite place and that it is not merely an image of God's sovereignty, is so literalistic as to seem almost an anthropomorphist in comparison with later theologians.

Faith is "word and deed, subject to increase and decrease." Islām and faith are not coextensive. The problem of sin is not a grave one for the al-Ašʻarī of the *Ibānah* and the creed. And no wonder! for his belief in God's decree is absolute. God wills, knows, and creates all the actions of creatures. He might, if He wished, guide the infidels; but as a matter of fact He misleads them. "Human beings are not capable of creating anything;" "nobody has the capacity to do a thing before he does it;" "there cannot be, under the authority of God, any acquisition on the part of human beings that He does not will." Behind everything is the arbitrary will of God, and even man's "acquisition" or "appropriation" (*iktisāb*) of the deeds God wills for him implies no independence on his part.

The Murjite "sect" is the only one whose beliefs have found a place in this creed. Against the other sects al-Ašʻarī takes a determined stand.

The two other Sunnite theologians of al-Ašʻarī's period, aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī and al-Māturīdī, were Ḥanīfites. The *Ibānah* contains several traditions that disparage Abū Ḥanīfah. These three thinkers, despite their common purpose, were not in complete agreement on all questions. A certain *rapprochement* between the Ašʻarite and the Māturīdite schools undoubtedly took place in later times; but al-Ašʻarī himself was not wholly of one mind with his two contemporaries. Where he diverges from aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī, to be sure, the difference is chiefly one of language and emphasis. One point, however,—the question of the capacity—requires special notice. Al-Ašʻarī makes the flat statement that nobody has the capacity to do a thing before he does it. Aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī makes a distinction between the ability God gives and the ability that consists in a natural fitness for the performance of actions. Nevertheless, although he seems to regard the imposition of religious duties as based upon the latter ability,[130] the language in which he phrases his belief implies that the two kinds of ability

[130] Cf. Wensinck, op. cit. 157.

are merely aspects of a single kind. It is hardly possible, indeed, to tell precisely how far apart the two sheikhs stood on this question.

No creed of al-Māturīdī's is available for comparison, but in the book known as *Ar-rawḍah al-bahiyyah*,[131] a twelfth century work, thirteen differences between the Ašʻarite and the Māturīdite schools are enumerated:

Question	Answer: al-Ašʻarī	Answer: al-Māturīdī
1. When one calls a certain person a believer, must one add, "If God wishes?"	Yes.	No.
2. Can a righteous man still be damned, a damned person still be saved?	No.	Yes.
3. Do infidels receive divine favors?	No.	Yes.
4. Do deceased prophets continue to exist as prophets?	Undecided.	Yes.
5. Is God's "will" the same as His "satisfaction"?	Yes.	No.
6. Is blind faith true faith?	Undecided.	Yes.
7. "Acquisition," on which they differed		
8. Can God punish one who obeys Him?	Yes.	No.
9. Is our knowledge of God the result of revelation or of reason?	Revelation.	Reason.
10. Are God's active attributes eternal, or do they come to an end?	Come to an end.	Eternal.
11. Is God's eternal Word heard, or not?	Yes.	No.
12. Can God hold man responsible for what he cannot do?	Yes.	No.
13. The Ḥanīfites believed that prophets were preserved from all sins; the Ašʻarites, that they could commit light sins.		

Of these differences, 4 and 13 may be struck out at once, since the al-Ašʻarī we are considering did not discuss them. In the *Ibānah*, al-Ašʻarī's use of Tradition implies that he would have answered 2 in the affirmative, instead of in the negative. Article XIV of the *Maqālāt* creed shows that al-Ašʻarī said "no" to question 5, and not "yes." The statement of the *Rawḍah* with regard to 11 and 12 is in accord with al-Ašʻarī's theology as we know it from the *Ibānah* and the creed; and he

[131] Spitta, op. cit. 112 ff.

would probably have answered 8 and 9 in the way the *Rawḍah* represents him as answering them. On the question of the acquisition, al-Māturīdī probably took the more liberal view of the two from the beginning. The answer to 1 is very likely correct. Numbers 6 and 10, like 4 and 13, are questions discussed rather by later Aš'arites than by al-Aš'arī.

The information given by the *Rawḍah* cannot be accepted without much criticism; and, in addition, one must beware of reading back into the teaching of the founders the differences of the schools. Nevertheless the founders, in all likelihood, really disagreed on some important points.[132]

Al-Aš'arī's school did not at once attain to security. Under Ṭuġrilbeg (died A. H. 455), the vizier al-Kundurī succeeded in effecting an extensive persecution of the Aš'arites, and this was the occasion of a widespread dispersion of the Aš'arite teachers. Under Alp Arslan, the persecution came to an end; and the vizier Niẓām al-Mulk, four years later, gave the Aš'arites an academy in Baġdād. From that time on, they were established in the Muslim world. Their position had been challenged in the vitriolic tirades of Ibn Ḥazm, the Ẓāhirite (died A. H. 456); but, not much later, Ibn Tūmart achieved his great success in North Africa, and both Aš'arite and Ẓāhirite elements were to be found in his teaching. The great Aš'arites al-Bāqillānī, Ibn Fūrak, al-Isfarā'īnī, al-Qušayrī, al-Juwaynī, and al-Ġazālī, succeeded one another. Al-Juwaynī dealt with the roots of the law, and, like al-Aš'arī, did not recognize *qiyās*.[133] Al-Ġazālī likewise follows the Master; his roots are the Qur'ān, the *sunnah*, and the *ijmā'* [134] In theology, the adherence of the school to the founder was less close. "Apart from isolated efforts, the development of Muslim dogmatics from the age of al-Ash'arī to the present day follows a course which can be characterized as that of a growing intellectualism." [135] Against this sterility so fine a soul as al-Ġazālī's could not but rebel. He is even more a symbol than al-Aš'arī; for into the latter's union of tradition and reason—the latter wonderfully developed since al-Aš'arī's death—he brought mysticism. The rude religion of Muḥammad had sustained the impact of its encounter with many forces—Christian theology, Neoplatonism, Greek philosophy in general, science, skepticism—, and the strands of tradition, reason, and devotion, in the person of the greatest of Muslim theologians, were once more bound together in the firm knot of conviction.

[132] These matters of difference were not secondary, as Spitta thinks. See the article "Māturīdī" in the Encyclopaedia of Islām.

[133] M. Schreiner in ZDMG 52 (1898) 493.

[134] M. Schreiner, "Zur Geschichte des Aš'aritenthums" 97.

[135] Wensinck, op. cit. 248.

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A few observations on the translation will be pertinent here. The divisions and the text of the Cairo edition have been followed throughout.[136] I regret that considerations of time and expense have prevented me from making a critical study of the manuscripts. However, the Cairo text is critical [137]—at least, according to Oriental standards—and I am confident that it is sound enough for practical purposes. I have called attention in the footnotes to all the variant readings of the Hyderabad text that seem worthy of consideration. The quotations from the Qur'ān have been borrowed—in many instances with slight alterations—from Rodwell's translation.[138]

If the style of my rendering occasionally seems unsuitably colloquial, I beg the reader to attribute the lapse, not to a want of taste, but to a desire—not always realized, perhaps—to express as fully as possible the manner of the original. When he encounters a tradition with a long and intricate chain of authorities, he should remember that the antecedent of a pronoun in the first person, in such a tradition, is the name of the original authority, and the latter is the person who relates the anecdote or quotes the dictum that is the substance of the tradition. So long as the reader remains aware of this fact, he will labor under no confusion. Manifestly, the use of quotation marks in the translation of traditions is impracticable.

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[136] Its pages are indicated by Arabic numerals in brackets; e. g., [p. 53].

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[138] The Koran, tr. J. M. Rodwell (Everyman's Library no. 380).

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TRANSLATION

The Author's Preface

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The Sayyid and Imām Abu 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Ismā'īl al-Aš'arī al-Baṣrī (may God have mercy upon him!)[1] said:

Praise[2] to God! the One, the Almighty, the Glorious, the only One to whom unity is ascribed, the Magnified in praise, whom the attributes of human beings do not adequately describe. He has neither adversary nor rival, and He is the Creator and the Restorer, "the Doer of what He wills."[3] He is too exalted to possess consorts or children,[4] too holy to associate with the genera of creation or things corrupt. He has not any form capable of expression, nor is a definition[5] of Him by means of a simile possible. He has always had the attributes of primacy and power, and He will always continue to be knowing and cognizant. His knowledge embraces[6] created things, His will is fully realized in them, and the secrets of things are not far from Him. The vicissitudes of passing time do not alter Him, nor does fatigue or weariness overtake Him in the creation of anything He creates, nor does exhaustion or loss of power touch Him. He creates things by His power, directs them by His wish, compels them by His strength, and reduces them by His might; wherefore the proud submit to His power, the lofty are subject to the strength of His lordship, doubters are cut off from a sure foundation in the knowledge of Him, to Him the necks of men submit, and the prudence of the discreet is confounded in His kingdom. By His word, the seven heavens arose, the extended earth is fixed, the firm mountains are established, the "fertilizing winds"[7] blow, the clouds pursue their journey in the celestial atmosphere, and the seas observe their bounds. He is a compelling God,[8] to whom the strong do homage and the exalted bow, and the worlds render Him their duty whether they will or no.[8]

We praise Him as He praises Himself, and as He merits and deserves,

[1] The devout ejaculations of the original are almostly invariably omitted from the translation.

[2] A translation of the opening section into German will be found in Spitta, op. cit. 88-101, and a translation into French in Mehren, op. cit. 208-220.

[3] Qur'ān 11. 109.

[4] Cf. ibid. 112. 3.

[5] Or "limit capable of being expressed by a simile," i.e., to which there is a counterpart among created things. See Wensinck, The Muslim Creed 210.

[6] One ms. has "preceded."

[7] Qur'ān 15. 22.

[8] *H* omits. Instead of "He is a compelling God," it reads "He is the one God, the Compeller."

and as the praisers among all [p. 5] His creatures praise Him. We ask His help in the manner of one who entrusts his affairs to Him and confesses that there is no asylum or refuge from Him, but only to Him. We ask His forgiveness in the manner of one who confesses his wrong-doing and acknowledges his sin. With a confession of His unity and a clear acknowledgment of His lordship, we bear witness that there is no God but Allāh alone, "who hath no associate;" [9] that He is the One who knows what the privy thoughts shut away and the secrets enwrap, what souls hide, and what the seas keep out of sight, what hearts conceal, and "how much the wombs lessen and enlarge; with Him everything is by measure." [10] No word is concealed from Him, no purpose is unknown to Him, "not a leaf falls but He knoweth it, neither is there a grain in the dark places of the earth, there is neither moisture nor dryness but it is noted in a distinct writing," [11] and He knows what the doers do, and that to which the returners return. We seek guidance from Him, and we ask Him for grace (*tawfīq*) [12] to avert ruin. We bear witness that Muḥammad is His Servant, His Apostle, His Prophet, His Trustworthy One, His Chosen One, whom He sent to His creation with the light that sheds its beams afar, with the flashing lamp, the clear arguments, the evidences, the dazzling signs, the compelling wonders; wherefore he delivered his message from God,[13] consulted His good in His creation,[14] labored strenuously for God with a true zeal,[15] consulted His good in the countries of the earth,[15] and opposed the rebellious people,[16] until the Word of God was fulfilled, until he attained success, and all [17] men obeyed the truth with homage, and assurance of success came to him, unfatigued, unwearied. Therefore, may God's grace be with him (for he led the way to guidance and made clear [18] the road of escape from error and blindness),[18] and with the blessed people of his house, and with his chosen Companions and his pure wives, the mothers of the faithful! By him God informed us of the religious laws (*šarāʾiʿ*) [19] and the ordinances (*aḥkām*),[20] of the lawful and the prohibited, and by him He

[9] Qur'ān 6. 163. [10] Ibid. 13. 9. [11] Ibid. 6. 59.

[12] God gives "grace," "guidance," "right direction," "help," "preservation" to the believer, while He "deserts" and "misleads" the infidel.

[13] *H*: "he delivered his Lord's message."

[14] *H*: "gave good counsel to his community."

[15] *H* omits. [16] *H* omits. [17] *H* omits "all."

[18] *H* omits. *H* seems to mean "for he led the way to illuminating guidance."

[19] The religious law of the Qur'ān controls every aspect of the Muslim's life. The science that explains and applies this law is known as the *fiqh*. Dogmatic theology is "the greater *fiqh*."

[20] The five classes of acts: obligatory, meritorious, lawful, disapproved, and

made clear to us the religious law of Islām, until by him the dark night of gloom was lifted from us, the doubts were removed from us, the screens were drawn back, the proofs were made clear to us. He brought us "a glorious Book. Vanity shall not come to it from before it, or from behind it; it is a missive sent down from the Wise and Praiseworthy," [21] in which is comprised the knowledge of "the first and the last." [22] By him He perfected the duties and the Religion, and therefore he is the "sure road" [23] of God and His firm rope. He who holds fast to him shall escape, but he who opposes him shall err and wander. In ignorance is thy ruin, and God has urged us in His Book to hold fast to the *sunnah* of His Apostle; wherefore God has said, [p. 6] "What the Apostle has given you, take: what he has refused you, refuse," [24] and God has said, "And let those who transgress his command beware, lest some present trouble befall them, or a grievous chastisement befall them," [25] and, "but if they would report them to the Apostle and to those who are in authority among them, those who desire information would learn it from them," [26] and "And whatever the subject of your disputes, with God doth its decision rest," [27] "and if in aught ye differ, bring it to God and the Apostle," [28] meaning God's Book and His Prophet's *sunnah*, and He has said, "neither speaketh he from mere impulse. The Qur'ān is no other than a revelation revealed to him," [29] and "Say: It is not for me to change it as mine own soul prompteth. I follow only what is revealed to me," [30] and "The words of the faithful, when called to God and His Apostle that He may judge between them, are only to say, 'We have heard and we obey,'" [31] (and so He commands them to hear his words, obey his command, and beware of transgressing it), and He has said, "obey God and obey the Apostle," [32] (and so He commands them to obey His Apostle, just as He commands them to obey Himself; and He bids them hold fast to the *sunnah* of His Prophet, just as He commands them to act in strict conformity with His Book). But a great many of those against whom their "misery prevailed" [33] and those over whom "Satan has won the mastery" [34]—the *sunan* of God's Prophet are "behind their backs" [35] and they have inclined towards forebears of theirs whose guidance in religion they have accepted and adopted their beliefs, set at nought the *sunan* of God's Apostle and

forbidden (Juynboll, Handbuch des islāmischen Gesetzes 59 ff.; Macdonald, Development of Muslim Theology 73) are also called "*aḥkām*."

[21] Qur'ān 41. 41, 42. [26] Ibid. 4. 85. [31] Ibid. 24. 50.

[22] Ibid. 56. 49. [27] Ibid. 42. 8. [32] Ibid. 4. 62.

[23] Ibid. 1. 5 and passim. [28] Ibid. 4. 62. [33] Ibid. 23. 108.

[24] Ibid. 59. 7. [29] Ibid. 53. 3, 4. [34] Ibid. 58. 20.

[25] Ibid. 24. 63. [30] Ibid. 10. 16. [35] Ibid. 2. 95, 3. 184, 6. 94.

shunned them, denied and gainsaid them, by their calumny against God, and have erred and not been rightly guided. I enjoin upon you, O servants of God! the fear of God, and warn you against the world; for it is fresh and sweet, and it deceives [36] its inhabitants and deludes those who dwell in it, and God has said, "And set before them a similitude of the present life. It is as water which We send down from heaven, and the herb of the earth is mingled with it, and on the morrow it becometh dry stubble which the winds scatter; for God hath power over all things." [37] To him who is in good circumstances [38] in it, it brings tears later on, and upon him to whom it has imparted its joys in secret, it bestows the open sequel of its woes. Its abundant vanities are transitory, for the things it contains agree with the judgment pronounced upon it by its Lord in His words, "All on the earth shall pass away." [39] Then labor for the abiding life and for endless eternity. The world shall pass away from its inhabitants, and their works shall remain as strings upon their necks.[40] Know that you are mortal, and then that you return to your Lord after your deaths. Assuredly He will reward those who have done evil with that which [p. 7] they have done, and He will reward those who have done good with good. Therefore, be diligent in obedience to your Lord, and refuse what He has refused you.

Chapter on the Exposition of the Belief of the Deviators and Innovators.

To begin with, there are many deviators from the truth among the Muʿtazilah [41] and the *ahl al-qadar*,[42] whose straying desires have inclined them to the acceptance of the principles (*taqlīd*) [43] of their leaders

[36] *H*: "harms."

[37] Qur'ān 18.43.

[38] *H* has "*ḫayrihi*" "his good," *E* "*ḥayrah*" "perplexity." The former reading clearly makes the better sense. Perhaps the correct reading is *ḫayrah*. The texts differ in several details. *H* reads: "To him who is in good circumstances in it, it brings other things after it (the world), and on him whom it has given its consoling beverages in secret, it bestows the open sequel of its strife." The awkwardness of "after it" disappears if we read *ḫayrah* and regard this word as the antecedent of "it."

[39] Qur'ān 55.26. At the beginning of this sentence *E* misprints *ġarārah* for *ġazārah* "abundance."

[40] Cf. ibid. 3.176, 17.14.

[41] The Muʿtazilah are al-Ašʿarī's chief adversaries. He commences with a summary of their tenets.

[42] People who discuss predestination.

[43] With the fixation of the law the possibility of inaugurating new schools and interpreting afresh the legal content of Islam came to an end. There was, therefore, after this date, no alternative to *taqlīd*, by which one accepted the interpretation of a recognized authority. Al-Ašʿarī means to insult the Muʿtazilah by stressing their derivation from the "people of straying impulses" and the Qadariyyah.

and their departed forebears; so that they interpret the Qurʾān according to their opinions with an interpretation for which God has neither revealed authority nor shown proof, and which they have not derived from the Apostle of the Lord of the Worlds or from the ancients of the past; and, as a result, they oppose the traditions of the Companions, related on the authority of the Prophet of God, concerning God's visibility to sight, although with regard to it the traditions come from various sources, and the *āṯār* upon it have been continuous, and the *aḫbār* upon it have come down in steady succession. (1) They deny the intercession of the Apostle of God for sinners, and reject the traditions concerning it that are related on the authority of the ancients [44] of the past. (2) They gainsay the punishment of the grave and the doctrine that the infidels are punished in their graves, although the Companions and the Successors have agreed upon this matter unanimously. (3) They maintain the createdness of the Qurʾān; thereby approximating the belief of their brethren among the polytheists, who said, "it is merely the word of a mortal"; [45, 46] and so they think that the Qurʾān is like the word of a mortal.[46] (4) They assert and are convinced that human beings create evil; thereby approximating the belief of the Magians, who assert that there are two creators, one of them creating good and the other creating evil (for the Qadariyyah think that God creates good and that Satan creates evil). (5) They think that God may wish what is not,[47] and what He does not wish may be; in disagreement with that upon which the Muslims have unanimously agreed, namely, that what God wishes is, and what He does not wish is not; and contrarily to the words of God "but ye shall not wish except God wish" [48]—He says that we shall not wish a thing unless God has wished that we wish it—, and to His words "If God had wished, they would not have wrangled," [49] and His words "Had We wished, We had certainly given to every soul its guidance," [50] and His words "Doer of what He wills," [51] and His statement with reference to Šuʿayb, that he said, "nor can we return to it, except God our Lord wish; our Lord embraceth all things in His ken." [52]

[44] *H* omits "ancients," reading "those of the past." The word translated "ancients" is *salaf*, which Macdonald renders "Fathers." "Primitive Muslims" perhaps conveys the sense better than any other translation. Like the apostolic Christians, the *salaf* were idealized and imitated.

[45] Qur'ān 74.25.

[46] *H* omits.

[47] *H* omits "not."

[48] Qur'ān 76.30.

[49] Ibid. 2.254.

[50] Ibid. 32.13.

[51] Ibid. 11.109.

[52] Ibid. 7.87.

Therefore the Apostle of God called them "the Magians of this Community,"[53] because they have adopted the religion of the Magians and copied their tenets, and think that there are two creators, the one for good and the other for evil, just as the Magians think, and that there are evils God does not wish, as [p. 8] the Magians believe. (6) They think that they, and not God, have control over what is hurtful and what is helpful to them, contrarily to the words of God to His Prophet, "Say: I have no control over what may be helpful or hurtful to me, but as God wisheth,"[54] and in opposition to the Qur'ān and to that upon which the people of Islām have unanimously agreed. (7) They think that they alone, and not their Lord, have power over their works, and assert that they are independent of God, and attribute to themselves power over that over which they do not attribute power to God, just as the Magians assert that Satan has power over evil that they do not assert God has. Hence they are "the Magians of this Community," since they have adopted the religion of the Magians, hold fast to their beliefs, incline to their errors, cause men to despair of God's mercy and lose their hope of His spirit, and have condemned the disobedient to Hell forever, in disagreement with God's words, "But other than this will He forgive to whom He wishes."[55] (8) They think that he who enters Hell will not come forth from it, in disagreement with the tradition, related on the authority of the Apostle of God, that God will bring forth people out of Hell[56] after they have been burned in it and become ashes. (9) They deny that God has a face, notwithstanding His words "but the face of thy Lord shall abide resplendent with majesty and glory."[57] They deny that He has two hands, notwithstanding His words "before him whom I have created with My two hands."[58] They deny that God has an eye,[59] notwithstanding His words "under Our eyes it floated on,"[60] and His words "that thou mightest be reared in Mine eye."[61] They deny that God has knowledge, notwithstanding His words "in His knowledge He sent it down."[62] They deny that God has power, notwithstanding His words "Possessed of might, the Unshaken."[63] (10) They reject the tradition, related on the authority of the Prophet, that God descends each night to the lower heaven,[64] and other traditions among those that the trustworthy have handed down on the authority of

[53] See Wensinck, Handbook 121 for the authorities.
[54] Qur'ān 7. 188.
[55] Ibid. 4. 51.
[56] Wensinck, op. cit. 97.
[57] Qur'ān 55. 27.
[58] Ibid. 38. 75.
[59] *H*: "two eyes."
[60] Qur'ān 54. 14.
[61] Ibid. 20. 40. *H* omits this text.
[62] Ibid. 4. 164.
[63] Ibid. 51. 58.
[64] See below, 53, 85.

God's Apostle. Of like fashion are all the innovators—the Jahmiyyah,[65] the Murji'ah,[66] and the Ḥarūriyyah,[67]—deviators in their innovations, who dissent from the Book, and the *sunnah*, and that upon which the Prophet and his Companions take their stand and the Community have unanimously agreed, as do the Qadariyyah Mu'tazilah. I will discuss the matter chapter by chapter and point by point, God willing.[68] Help and strength are by Him, and from Him are grace and right direction.[68]

Chapter[69] Concerning the Exposition of the Belief of the Followers of the Truth and the *Sunnah*.

If anybody says to us, "You have denied the beliefs of the Mu'tazilah, the Qadariyyah, the Jahmiyyah, the Ḥarūriyyah, the Rāfiḍah, and the Murji'ah; now let us know the beliefs you hold and the religion you follow," the answer is:

The belief we hold and the religion we follow are holding fast to the Book of our Lord [p. 9], to the *sunnah* of our Prophet,[70] and to the traditions related on the authority of the Companions and the Successors and the *imāms*[71] of the *ḥadīṯ*;—to that we hold firmly, professing what Abū 'Abdallāh Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥanbal[72] professed, and avoiding[73] him who dissents from his belief, because he is the excellent *imām* and the perfect leader, through whom God declared the truth, removed error, manifested the modes of action, and overcame the innova-

[65] The followers of Jahm ibn Ṣafwān, who believed "that Paradise and Hell would perish and come to an end; and that faith is merely the knowledge of God and unbelief is merely ignorance of Him; and that none possesses the power of action save God alone; and that He is the doer and men's acts are only ascribed to them metaphorically . . . and Jahm believed in the enjoining of the known and the forbidding of the unknown. . . . It is related that he used to say, 'I do not say that God is a thing, because that is saying that He resembles created things.' He used to say that God's knowledge originated in time, according to what is related of him, and he used to express his belief that the Qur'ān was created and that God might not be said to be an eternal knower of created things before they exist" (*Maqālāt* 279, 280). See also Wensinck, The Muslim Creed 119 ff.
[66] See Introduction, 11.
[67] One of the names applied to the Ḫārijites (*Maqālāt* 127).
[68] *H* omits most of this, reading merely "Help is by Him."
[69] A translation of this section into English will be found in Macdonald, op. cit. 293-299.
[70] Wensinck, Handbook 130.
[71] The founders of the *ḥadīṯ* science.
[72] A. D. 780-855. On his life and work see Patton, op. cit.; Goldziher in the Encyclopaedia of Islām; and the Introduction to the present work.
[73] *H*: "dissenting from what is at variance with his belief."

tions of the innovators, the deviation of the deviators, and the skepticism of the skeptics. The mercy of God be upon him,—for he is an eminent *imām* and an exalted, honored friend,—[74] and upon all the other *imāms* of Islām! [74] The substance of our belief is that we confess God, His angels,[75] His books, His apostles, the revelation of God,[76] and what the trustworthy have handed down on the authority of God's Apostle, rejecting none of them. We confess that God is one God—there is no god but He—unique, eternal, possessing neither consort nor child; and that Muḥammad is His Servant and Apostle, whom He sent with the guidance and the real Religion; and that Paradise is real and Hell is real; and that there is no doubt regarding the Coming Hour; [77] and that God will raise up those who are in the graves; and that God is seated on His throne (as He has said, "The Merciful is seated on the Throne"); [78] and that He has a face (as He has said, "but the face of thy Lord shall abide resplendent with majesty and glory"); [79] and that He has two hands, *bilā kayfa* (as He has said, "I have created with My two hands," [80] and as He has said, "Nay! outstretched are both His hands"); [81] and that He has an eye,[82] *bilā kayfa* (as He has said, "under Our eyes it floated on"),[83] and that anybody who thinks that the names of God are other than He is in error; and that God has knowledge (as He said, "in His knowledge He sent it down," [84] and as He said, "and no female conceiveth or bringeth forth without His knowledge").[85] We also assert that God has hearing and sight, and we do not deny it as the Mu'tazilah, the Jahmiyyah, and the H̱ārijites deny it; and we assert that God has prowess (*quwwah*) (as He has said, "Saw they not that God Who created them was mightier than they in prowess?"); [86] and we believe that the Word of God is uncreated, and that He has created nothing without first saying to it, "Be!," and it is (as He has said, "Our word to a thing when We will it is but to say, 'Be!,' and it is"); [87] and that there is no good or evil on earth, save what God wishes; and that things exist by God's wish; and that not a single person has the

[74] *H* omits.

[75] On the angels, the books, and the apostles, see Lammens, L'Islam 55 ff.; Wensinck, The Muslim Creed 198 ff.

[76] Literally, "what comes from God." The same phrase occurs in the *Maqālāt* creed (*Maqālāt* 290). *H*: "what they bring from God."

[77] Wensinck, Handbook 100 f.

[78] Qur'ān 20. 4.

[79] Ibid. 55. 27.

[80] Ibid. 38. 75.

[81] Ibid. 5. 69.

[82] *H*: "two eyes."

[83] Qur'ān 54. 14.

[84] Ibid. 4. 164.

[85] Ibid. 35. 12.

[86] Ibid. 41. 14.

[87] Ibid. 16. 42.

capacity to do anything until God causes him to act, and we are not independent of God, nor can we pass beyond the range of God's knowledge; and that there is no creator save God, and the works of human beings are things created and decreed by God (as He has said, "God has created you and what you make"); [88] and that human beings have not the power to create anything, but are themselves created (as He has said, "Is there a creator other than God?," [89] and as He has said, "they create [p. 10] nothing, but are themselves created," [90] and as He has said, "Shall He then who creates be as he who creates not?," [91] and as He has said, "Were they created by nothing or were they the creators?," [92] for this is mentioned in God's Book frequently); and that God gives the faithful grace to be obedient to Him, is gracious to them, considers them, does what is salutary for them, guides them; whereas He causes the infidels to err, does not guide them, does not give them the grace to believe,[93] as the deviators and rebels think (for, if He were gracious to them and did what was salutary for them, they would be sound; and if He guided them, they would be guided; as He has said, "He whom God guides is the guided, and they whom He misleads shall be the lost"); [94] and that God has power to do what is salutary for the infidels and be gracious to them, that they may become believers, nevertheless He wills that they be infidels, as He knows; and that He forsakes them and seals up their hearts; and that good and evil are dependent upon the general and particular decrees of God. We believe in God's general and particular decrees, His good and His evil, His sweet and His bitter; and we know that what passes us by was not to befall us, and what befalls us was not to pass us by; [95] and that human beings do not control for themselves what is hurtful or what is helpful, except what God wishes; [96] and that we ought to commit our affairs to God and assert our complete need of and dependence upon Him. We believe, too, that the Qur'ān [97] is the uncreated Word of God, and that he who believes the Qur'ān is created is an infidel. We hold that God will be seen in the next world by sight [98] (as the moon is seen on the night it is full, so shall the faithful see Him, as we are told in the traditions that come

[88] Ibid. 37. 94.

[89] Ibid. 35. 3.

[90] Ibid. 16. 20.

[91] Ibid. 16. 17.

[92] Ibid. 52. 35.

[93] *H*: "does not favor them with the signs."

[94] Qur'ān 7. 177. *H* omits this text.

[95] Cf. Fiqh Akbar I and parallels (Wensinck, The Muslim Creed 103), where the same statement is found.

[96] *H*: "save by God, as He has said."

[97] *H* omits and reads "that the Word of God is uncreated."

[98] One ms. adds "on the day of resurrection."

down on the authority of God's Apostle); [99] and we believe that the infidels will be veiled from Him when the faithful see Him in Paradise (as God has said, "Yea, they shall be shut out as by a veil from their Lord on that day"); [100] and that Moses asked God for the sight of Him in this world, and "God manifested Himself to the mountain" and "turned it to dust," [101] and taught Moses by it that he should not see Him in this world. It is our opinion that we ought not to declare a single one of the people of the *qiblah* [102] an infidel for a sin of which he is guilty, such as fornication or theft or the drinking of wine, as the Ḫārijites hold, thinking that such people are infidels; but we believe that he who commits any of these mortal sins, such as fornication or theft or the like, presumptuously declaring it lawful and not acknowledging that it is forbidden, is an infidel.[103] We believe that Islām is more extensive than faith, and that faith is not the whole of Islām.[104] We hold that God changes men's hearts,[105] and that their hearts are between two of God's fingers, and that God will place the heavens on a finger and the earth on a finger,[106] as we are told in the tradition that comes down on the authority of God's Apostle [p. 11]. We hold that we ought not to relegate any of the monotheists, or those who hold fast to the faith, to Paradise or to Hell, save him in whose favor the Apostle of God has borne witness concerning Paradise; [107] and we hope that sinners will attain to Paradise, but we fear that they will be punished in Hell. We believe that God, by the intercession of Muḥammad, God's Apostle, will bring forth a people from Hell after they have been burned to ashes, in accordance with what we are told in the traditions related on the authority of God's Apostle. We believe in the punishment of the

[99] For references to traditions see Wensinck, Handbook 17.

[100] Qur'ān 83. 15.

[101] Ibid. 7. 139. Cf. Bayḍāwī, Comm. in Cor., ed. Fleischer, ad loc.: "When his Lord manifested Himself to the mountain, His majesty appeared to it and His power and command were brought to bear upon it. Another interpretation is that He gave it life and vision, so that it saw Him."

[102] The direction in which one faces when praying—in the case of Muslims, towards Mecca. The people of the *qiblah* are the Muslims.

[103] The Fiqh Akbar II (art. 11) adopts the same position. The earlier Fiqh Akbar I and Testament of Abū Ḥanīfah lack the exception, simply stating that sins do not make believers unbelievers.

[104] Cf. Fiqh Akbar II (Wensinck, The Muslim Creed 194): "Language distinguishes between faith and Islam. Yet there is no faith without Islam and Islam without faith cannot be found. The two are as back and belly. Religion is a noun covering faith and Islam and all the commandments of the law."

[105] At death.

[106] On the Last Day.

[107] Wensinck, Handbook 181.

grave,[108] and in the Pool,[109] and hold that the Scales [110] are real, and the Bridge [111] is real, and the resurrection after death is real, and that God will line up human beings at the Station,[112] and settle the account with the faithful. We believe that faith consists of words and deeds, and is subject to increase and decrease; [113] and we receive the authentic traditions [114] regarding it [114] related on the authority of the Apostle of God, which the trustworthy have transmitted, one just man from another, until the tradition goes back to the Apostle of God. We believe in affection towards our forebears in the faith,[115] whom God chose for the company of His Prophet, and we praise them with the praise wherewith God praised them, and are attached to them all. We believe that the excellent *imām*, after the Apostle of God, is Abū Bakr the Veracious, and that God strengthened the Religion by him and gave him success against the backsliders, and the Muslims promoted him to the imāmate just as the Apostle of God made him leader of prayer, and they all named him the caliph of God's Apostle; then after him came 'Umar ibn al-Ḫaṭṭāb; then 'Uṯmān ibn 'Affān (those who fought with him fought with him wrongfully and unrighteously); then 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib; wherefore these are the *imāms* after the Apostle of God, and their caliphate is a caliphate of prophecy. We bear witness concerning Paradise in favor of the ten in whose favor the Apostle of God bore witness to it,[116] and we are attached to all [117] the Companions of the Prophet, and avoid what was disputed among them. We hold that the four *imāms* are orthodox, divinely guided, excellent caliphs, unmatched by others in excellence. We accept all the traditions for which the traditionists vouch: the descent into the lower heavens, and the Lord's saying, "Is there any who has a request? Is there any who asks forgiveness?," [118] and the other things they relate and vouch for; dissenting from what the devia-

[108] Found in the traditions (ibid. passim), but not explicitly in the Qur'ān. The three texts in the latter used to prove the doctrine are 40. 11, 40. 49, 52. 47 (Rüling, Beiträge zur Eschatologie des Islam 8).

[109] Ibid. 33 ff.

[110] Qur'ān 55.6 and passim.

[111] Wensinck, op. cit. 40.

[112] *Mawqif*. See the Encyclopaedia of Islām s. v.

[113] Cf. Testament of Abū Ḥanīfah arts. 2 and 5. Fiqh Akbar II art. 18. Both regard faith as a fixed quantity, and the latter distinguishes works from faith.

[114] *H* omits.

[115] Wensinck, op. cit. 23. Love towards them was regarded as an evidence, and even an element, of faith.

[116] Cf. above, 52.

[117] Literally "the rest of," but "all" is probably the meaning intended by the author. See W. Wright, A Grammar of the Arabic Language (1933) II 206.

[118] Wensinck, op. cit. 63.

tors and followers of error assert. We rely, in that wherein we differ, upon our Lord's Book, and the *sunnah* of our Prophet, and the unanimous consent (*ijmā'*) of the Muslims and what [p. 12] it signifies; and we do not introduce into God's religion innovations [119] that God does not allow, nor do we believe of God what we do not know. We believe that God will come in the Day of Resurrection (as He has said, "and thy Lord shall come and the angels rank on rank"); [120] and that God is near His servants, even as He wishes (as He has said, "We are nearer to him than his neck vein," [121] and as He said, "then He came nearer and approached and was at the distance of two bows or even closer").[122] It belongs to our religion to observe the Friday Assembly, and the feasts, and the remaining prayers and public devotions under the leadship of every pious man or impious (as it is related of 'Abdallāh ibn 'Umar [123] that he used to pray behind al-Ḥajjāj); [124] and we believe that the wiping of the sandals [125] is a *sunnah* at home and in travel, contrarily to the belief of anybody who denies it; and we approve prayer for the welfare of the *imāms* of the Muslims,[126] and the confession of their imāmate; and we regard it as an error on anybody's part to approve "going out" [127] against them when they have clearly abandoned rectitude; and we believe in abstinence [128] from "going out" against them with the sword, and abstinence from fighting in civil commotions (*fitnah*).[129] We confess the going forth of Antichrist (ad-Dajjāl),[130] as it is contained in the tradition related on the authority of God's Apostle. We believe in the punishment of the grave, and in Munkar and Nakīr,[131] and in their interrogation of those who are buried in their graves. We accept the *ḥadīṯ* of the Ascension (*mi'rāj*),[132] and regard as authentic

[119] *H* omits "innovations" and reads "what He does not allow us."
[120] Qur'ān 89. 23.
[121] Ibid. 50. 15.
[122] Ibid. 53. 8, 9.
[123] Wensinck, op. cit. 4.
[124] The notorious Umayyad general, whom some of the Muslims refused to regard as a believer.
[125] Cf. Qur'ān 5. 8. On the development of this view see Wensinck, The Muslim Creed 158 ff. On the traditions see Wensinck, Handbook 262.
[126] Al-Aš'arī means the public prayer offered for the sovereign in the *ḫuṭbah*.
[127] Here al-Aš'arī repudiates the practice of the Ḫārijites.
[128] *H*: "the denial of."
[129] No matter how great the provocation, the Sunnites discountenanced resistance of the ruling power. See Goldziher, Muhammedanische Studien II 93, 97.
[130] Wensinck, op. cit. 50.
[131] The angels of the grave. See Rüling, op. cit. 42, Wensinck in the Encyclopaedia of Islām s. v. The names as such do not occur in the Qur'ān and Wensinck finds them in only one tradition.
[132] Wensinck, op. cit. 25. Qur'ān 17. 1.

many of the visions in sleep,[133] and confess that there are interpretations to them. We approve alms [134] in behalf of the Muslim dead, and prayer [135] for their welfare; and we believe that God helps them by it. We accept it as true that there are wizards and witchcraft in the world, and that witchcraft exists in the world.[136] We believe in praying for those of the people of the *qiblah* who are dead, the pious and the impious, and in the lawfulness of being their heirs.[137] We confess that Paradise and Hell are created; [138] and that he who dies or is slain dies or is slain at his appointed term; and that sustenance is from God who gives it to His creatures in the permitted and the forbidden; and that Satan whispers to man and causes him to doubt [139] and infects him, contrarily to the belief of the Mu'tazilah and the Jahmiyyah (as God has said, "They who swallow down usury shall arise in the resurrection only as he ariseth whom Satan hath infected by his touch," [140] and as He has said, "against the mischief of the stealthily withdrawing whisperer, who whispereth in man's breast—against *jinn* and men").[141] We believe that God can design particularly for the just the signs He manifests to them. Our belief regarding the children of the polytheists is that God will kindle a fire for them in the next world, and then will say to them, "Rush into it!," as the tradition tells us concerning it. We hold [p. 13] that God knows what human beings are doing, and what they are going to do, what has been, what is, and how what is not would have been if it had been. We believe in obedience to the *imāms* and in the [142] sincere counsel [142] of the Muslims. We approve separation from every innovating tendency, and the avoidance of the people of straying impulses.[143] We will give arguments for the beliefs of ours we have mentioned, and the remaining ones we have not mentioned, chapter by chapter, and matter by matter, God willing.[144]

[133] Wensinck, op. cit. 61 f.
[134] Ibid. 20. One ms. has "faithful dead."
[135] Ibid. 36 f., 52.
[136] Ibid. 138 f.
[137] Ibid. 96. Only those of the same religion may inherit from each other. Naturally, if one Muslim considered another Muslim an infidel, he could not consistently inherit from him. It was the Ḫārijites particularly who felt such scruples.
[138] The vital question regarding Paradise and Hell was really whether or not they would disappear. The Jahmites maintained that they would, the Sunnites that they would not.
[139] *H*: "leads him astray."
[140] Qur'ān 2. 276.
[141] Ibid. 114. 4-6.
[142] *H*: "company."
[143] *H* has the singular.
[144] The translations of Spitta and Mehren end here.

Chapter Containing the *Kalām* [145] to Prove the Visibility of God to Sight (*abṣār*) in the Next World.[146]

God has said, "On that day shall faces beam with light,"—meaning "shall shine,"—"looking towards their Lord," [147]—meaning "seeing." The vision can be only one of the following kinds: (a) God means the regard [148] of scrutiny,[149] as when He says, "Can they not look up to the clouds, how they are created?;" [150] or (b) He means the regard of expectation, as when He says, "They await but a single blast;" [151] or (c) He means the regard of sight. Now God cannot mean the regard of reflection and scrutiny, because the next world is not the abode of scrutiny, and He cannot mean the regard of expectation, because, since "vision" and "face" are mentioned together, "vision" means the vision of the eyes, which are in the face (just as, when the lexicographers mention the vision of the heart and say, "Look upon this thing with thine heart," its meaning is not the vision of the eyes) and if this is true, since "vision" and "face" are mentioned together, "vision" does not mean the regard of expectation that is in the heart. Besides, surely the regard of expectation does not exist in Paradise, because expectation is accompanied by misgivings and uncertainty, while those who dwell in Paradise possess there such peaceful, pleasant, enduring life as neither eye has seen nor ear heard, and since this is so, they cannot be in a state of expectation, for whenever they think of anything, it is theirs by the very thought. Since that is true, God cannot have in mind the regard of fellow-feeling (*ta'aṭṭuf*),[152] because creatures cannot entertain this sentiment towards their Creator. Since three kinds of vision fail to answer the purpose, the fourth kind is certain, namely, that the meaning of His words "looking towards their Lord" is that they are seeing, they see their Lord.

[145] The chapter headings are not necessarily from al-Aš'arī's own hand. The word *kalām* is not used in the *Ibānah* except in these captions.

[146] *Maqālāt* 157: "The Mu'tazilah agree that God will not be beheld by sight, but they disagree as to whether or not He will be beheld by the hearts. Abu 'l-Huḏayl and most of the Mu'tazilah say, 'We shall see God with our hearts, in the sense that we shall know Him with our hearts.'"

[147] Qur'ān 75. 22, 23.

[148] The word "regard" is used here in the sense of "look." The involved argument in this passage hangs upon the interpretation of *naẓara* "to look," which is used in different senses.

[149] Or "the regard by which one contemplates a thing as an example."

[150] Qur'ān 88. 17. The word translated "clouds" really means "camels."

[151] Ibid. 36. 49.

[152] Wensinck translates "affection."

Among the things that invalidate the belief of the Mu'tazilah that God meant, by His words "looking towards their Lord," the regard of expectation, is the fact that He said "looking *towards* their Lord," whereas the regard of expectation [153] as they understand it [153] it cannot be connected with His use of the word "towards," because, among the Arabs, it is not correct to say "towards" with reference to the regard of expectation. Do you not agree that God, when He said, "They await but a single blast," did not say "towards," since His meaning was expectation? He has quoted from Bilqīs: "and await what my envoys bring back"; [154] and thus, since she meant [p. 14] expectation, she did not say "towards." Imru' 'l-Qays says:

> If you two will await me but an hour,
> Beside Umm Jundub you'll afford me time.[155]

Therefore, since he meant expectation, he did not say "towards." Hence, since God said "looking towards their Lord," we know that He did not mean expectation, but meant only the regard of sight; and since God connected the vision with the mention of the face, He meant the vision of the eyes that are in the face, just as He has said, "We have seen thee turning thy face towards every part of heaven; but We will have thee turn . . . ," [156] and thus He mentioned the face, but meant only the turning of his eyes towards heaven in expectation of the descent of the angel upon him, when God shifted him from the *qiblah* of Jerusalem to the Ka'abah.

If anybody says, "Why do you not say that, by His words 'looking towards their Lord,' He meant only 'looking towards the *reward* of their Lord'?," the answer is: The reward [157] of God is something other than Himself. God said "looking towards their Lord," but He did not say "looking towards something other than Himself." The Qur'ān is to be understood literally, and it is not for us to understand it in any other way, except by proof; otherwise it is to be understood literally. Do you not think that, since God said, "Pray to Me and serve Me," nobody can say He meant something other than Himself and understand these words in any but a literal way? Wherefore, if that is so, since He says "looking towards their Lord," we cannot, without proof, understand the Qur'ān in any but a literal way. Furthermore, it may be said to the Mu'tazilah: If you may think that by God's words "looking towards

[153] Literally, "among them." I am indebted to Dr. Abraham Halkin for the elucidation of these words.

[154] Qur'ān 27. 35.

[155] *Diwān* II line 2 (de Slane's translation 37; Rückert's translation 38).

[156] Qur'ān 2. 139.

[157] *H*: "*nuwwāb*" "vicegerents."

their Lord," He meant only that they were looking towards something other than Himself, why may not somebody else say that by His words "The eyes do not reach Him,"[158] God meant "They do not reach something other than Himself," and did not mean that they do not reach Him? And this is a distinction they have not the capacity to make.

Another proof. One of the things that prove that God is seen by sight is the words of Moses, "O Lord, show Thyself to me, that I may look upon Thee!"[159] Moses, whom God had clothed in the habit of the Prophets, and to whom He had given the impeccability[160] vouchsafed the Apostles, cannot have asked his Lord what was impossible with reference to Him; and since Moses could not do that, we know that he did not ask of his Lord an impossibility, and that visibility is possible with reference to our Lord. If visibility were impossible with reference to our Lord, as the Muʿtazilah think, and Moses did not know it, while they know it, they would certainly, according to their belief, know more about God than Moses; and this is what no Muslim will maintain.

If anybody says, "Do you not know the decree of God concerning the *ẓihār*[161] today, whereas the Prophet did not know it before it was revealed?," the answer is: The Prophet did not know it before God imposed upon men the decree of the *ẓihār*, but when the decree regarding it was obligatory upon them, He informed His Prophet before them, then the Prophet of God informed God's servants of it, and there was not a time when His decree was obligatory upon him and he did not know it [p. 15]. You think that it was obligatory upon Moses that he know the decree of visibility, and that it was impossible with reference to him, and since he did not know it at the time the knowledge of it you now possess was obligatory upon him, you must admit, in your ignorance, that you know more about what you are under obligation to know now than did Moses about what he was under obligation to know; and this is a departure from the religion of the Muslims.

[158] Qur'ān 6. 103. [159] Ibid. 7. 139.

[160] See Fiqh Akbar II 8, 9 (Wensinck, The Muslim Creed 192, 217 f.). The notion of the *ʿiṣmah* of the Prophets was probably new among the Sunnites at this period (ca. A. H. 300). Although this impeccability does not necessarily include complete inerrancy, Moses could not, in any case, have been mistaken about so important a matter as the visibility of God.

[161] Qur'ān 58. 1-5. The *ẓihār* was the act of repudiating one's wife by comparing her with the back (*ẓahr*) of one's mother or, more generally, putting her in the same class with one's close female relatives whom one was forbidden to marry. In heathen times, it had the effect of a divorce and the Prophet had followed the heathen custom, but God's "decree of the *ẓihār*" altered it to a temporary separation.

Another proof. One of the things that prove the possibility of God's being visible to sight is the words of God to Moses "and if it abide firm in its place, then shalt thou see Me,"[162] and thus, since God was capable of rendering the mountain firm in its place, He was capable of doing the thing by which, if He had done it, Moses would have seen him. Hence that is a proof that God is capable of showing His servants Himself, and He can be seen.

If anybody says, "Then why do you not say that God's words 'and if it abide firm in its place, then shalt thou see Me' are intended to show that His visibility is impossible?," the answer is: If God had intended to show that visibility was impossible, He would have connected the speech with what cannot occur, and not connected it with what can occur. But since He connected it with the mountain's abiding firm (a thing within God's power), that proves that God can be seen. Do you not agree that al-Ḫansāʾ, when she intended to show that she could not be at peace with one who was a foe to her brother, connected the speech with an impossibility, and said:

> I will never be at peace with a folk whose foe I've been
> Until bitumen's blackness is changed to gleaming white?[163]

God addresses the Arabs only in their classical language, and[164] we have recourse to what we find understood[164] in their speech and comprehended in their address; and, therefore, since God connected His visibility with a thing within His power and possible, we know that the visibility of God to sight is possible and not absurd.

Another proof. God has said, "Goodness itself and an increase of it for those who do good!"[165] The exegetes say, "It means the contemplation of God, for God does not bestow upon the people of His Paradise a more excellent favor than their contemplation of Him and their sight of Him, and God has said, 'and Ours will it be to augment their bliss.'"[166] The answer is: It does mean the contemplation of God, for He has said, "Their greeting on the day when they shall meet Him shall be 'Peace!,'"[167] and, since the faithful meet Him, they see Him. God has also said, "Yea, they shall be shut out as by a veil from their Lord on that day."[168] Hence He will shut them out from the sight of Him but will not shut out the faithful from it.

[162] Qur'ān 7. 139.

[163] *Dīwān* R VIII 11 (de Coppier's translation 94). The brother mentioned is Ṣaḫr.

[164] *II*: "we do not find it understood."

[165] Qur'ān 10. 27. [166] Ibid. 50. 34. [167] Ibid. 33. 43. [168] Ibid. 83. 15.

Question. If anybody says, "Then what is the meaning of His words 'The eyes do not reach Him'?,"[169] the answer is: It may be supposed that it is "They do not reach Him in this world, but reach Him in the next world," because the visibility of God is the best of delights, and the best of delights belongs to the better of the two abodes. It may also be supposed that God means, by His words [p. 16] "The eyes do not reach Him," "The eyes of the denying infidels do not reach Him," because God's Book agrees part with part, and so, since He says in one verse,[170] "On that day shall faces beam with light, looking towards their Lord,"[170] and in another verse, "The eyes do not reach Him," we know that He means only, "The eyes of the infidels do not reach Him."

A Question and the Answer to it.

If anybody says, "God scorned the request of those who asked of Him that He might be seen by sight, and therefore He said, 'The people of the book will ask of thee to cause a book to come down unto them from heaven. But a greater thing than this did they ask of Moses, for they said, "Show us God plainly!,"'"[171] it may be said to them: The children of Israel asked to see God because they denied the prophecy of Moses and would not believe him until they[172] should see God (for they said, "we will not believe thee until we see God plainly"),[173] and therefore, since they made this request for the visibility because they would not believe Moses until God should show Himself to them, God disdained their request, and not because visibility was impossible with reference to Him; just as God disdained the request of the people of the book that He send down to them a book from heaven, not because it was impossible, but only because they refused to believe in the Prophet of God until he should bring down to them a book from heaven.

Another proof. One of the things that prove the visibility of God to sight is the tradition related by groups of persons from various sources on the authority of God's Apostle, that he said, "You shall see your Lord as you see the moon on the night it is full and you shall not suffer harm in His visibility."[174] Since the visibility is spoken of without qualification and compared with the vision of the eyes, its meaning is none other than visibility to the eyes. The tradition concerning the visibility of God is handed down on the authority of God's Apostle, in

[169] Ibid. 6. 103.
[170] Ibid. 75. 22, 23. *H*: "the faces shall look towards Him on the day of resurrection."
[171] Ibid. 4. 152.
[172] *H*: "we."
[173] Qur'ān 2. 52.
[174] See Wensinck, Handbook 17.

various versions. The number of its narrators is greater than the number for the *ḫabar* of the Stoning,[175] and the number of those who relate that the Prophet said, "No testament for an heir,"[176] and the number of the narrators of the wiping of the sandals, and the number of the narrators of the words of God's Apostle "A woman shall not be married to the same man as her paternal or maternal aunt."[177] Since the stoning and the other things we have mentioned are *sunan* among the Mu'tazilah, God's visibility has a better title to be a *sunnah*, because of the large number of its narrators and its traditionists, who pass it on from generation to generation.[178] There is a *ḥadīṯ* that I certainly view as not containing a proof, for its narrator asked the Prophet merely concerning the visibility of God in this world, and said to him, "Have you seen your Lord?," and the Prophet said, "A light—how can I see it?;" for the eye does not reach [p. 17] created lights in this world in their realities, because if man directed his gaze towards the full orb of the sun and continued to look towards its orb, most of the light of his eye would disappear; and therefore, since God has decreed in this world that the eye shall not endure to look towards the full orb of the sun, *a fortiori*, the eye is not prepared to look towards God in this world, unless God strengthens it. Now opinions differ concerning the visibility of God in this world, whereas it has been related on the authority of the Companions of God's Apostle that the eye shall see God in the next world, and it has not been related on the authority of any of them that the eye shall *not* see God in the next world. Wherefore, since they agree unanimously on this matter and believe it, even though they differ regarding God's visibility in this world, His visibility in the next world is certain by their unanimity, even though there be differences of opinion regarding it in this world. We ourselves purpose only to prove God's visibility in the next world, inasmuch as this tradition works out to the disadvantage of the Mu'tazilah, not to their advantage, because they deny that God is light in reality; and therefore, if they base their argument on a *ḫabar* they abandon and swerve from, they are defeated in argument.

Another proof. One of the things that prove the visibility of God to sight is the fact that nothing exists that God cannot show us, and it is only the non-existent that He cannot show us; wherefore, since God certainly exists, it is not impossible that He should show us Himself.

[175] I. e. stoning in punishment of adultery.
[176] Wensinck, op. cit. 251. Those who inherit by right do not need a written will.
[177] Al-Buḫārī, ed. Krehl III 422.
[178] *H* has a poor text, with several words missing. See note ad loc.

Those who reject the visibility of God to sight have in mind only *ta'ṭīl*;[179] but, since it is impossible for them to profess *ta'ṭīl* openly, in so many words, they profess what is tantamount to *ta'ṭīl* and denial. May God be very far above it!

Another proof. One of the things that prove the visibility of God to sight is the fact that God beholds created things; and, since He is a beholder of things, then He must behold Himself;[180] and, since He is a beholder of Himself, He can show us Himself. That is true because he who does not know himself does not know a thing; wherefore, since God is a knower of things, He is a knower of Himself; and, in the same way, he who does not behold himself, does not behold things; wherefore, since God is a beholder of things, He is a beholder of Himself; and since He is a beholder of Himself, then He can show us Himself, just as, since He is a knower of Himself, He can cause us to know Himself. God has said, "I am with you both. I will hearken and I will behold."[181] Thus He tells us that He heard the words of them both and beheld them both; and he who thinks that God cannot be beheld by sight will be compelled to admit that God cannot be a beholder or a knower or a wielder of power, because it is possible for the knower, the wielder of power, the beholder, to be seen. If anybody says, "The words of the Prophet [p. 18] 'You shall see your Lord' mean 'You shall know your Lord necessarily,'" the answer is that the Prophet said this to his Companions as an evangel (and then said, "How shall it be with you when you see God?"), and it is impossible that he should have given them, as an evangel, a thing in which he associated the infidels with them, inasmuch as the Prophet said, "You shall see your Lord," and did not mean one kind of vision rather than another. On the contrary, it applies equally to the vision of the eye and the vision of the heart.

Another proof. The Muslims agree that in Paradise there is such peaceful, pleasant, abiding life as neither eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor mortal heart conceived; and there is not a more pleasant thing in Paradise than God's visibility to sight. Most of those who serve God serve Him for the view of His countenance. Hence, if there is not, after the visibility of God, a better thing than the visibility of His Prophet, and the visibility of God's Prophet is the greatest delight of Paradise, the visibility of God is better than the visibility of His Prophet. Since that is so, God does not forbid the prophets He sends, or His attending angels,

[179] See Introduction, 36.
[180] Literally, "then he does not see things who does not see himself."
[181] Qur'ān 20. 48.

or the congregation of the faithful and just, the view of His countenance—and that because vision does not leave a mark upon the thing seen (for the vision of the beholder remains in him); wherefore, since this is so, and vision does not leave a mark upon the thing seen, it does not necessitate *tašbīh*[182] or swerving from truth, and it is not impossible with respect to God that He should show His faithful servants Himself in His Paradise.

Chapter on God's Visibility.

The Mu'tazilah have based their argument that God is not visible to sight on His words "Their sight does not reach Him, but He reaches their sight."[183] They say, "Since God connects His words 'but He reaches their sight' with His words 'Their sight does not reach Him,' and His words 'but He reaches their sight' have the universal meaning that He reaches it in this world and the next world, and that He beholds them in this world and the next, then His words 'Their sight does not reach Him' are a proof that sight does not behold Him in this world or the next; and they share the universal meaning of His words 'but He reaches their sight,' because each phrase is connected with the other." The answer is: If the universal meaning of the two phrases is one, and the sight in question is both the sight of the eyes and the sight of the heart (for God said, "It is not that the sight is blind, but the hearts in the breasts are blind!"[184] [p. 19] and, "men of hands and sight"[185] (that is, it is by the sight); wherefore He meant the sight of the heart, and it is that with which the faithful smite the infidels; and the philologists say, "So-and-so is discerning in his craft," meaning "discerning in knowledge," and they say, "I have discerned it with my heart" just as they say, "I have discerned it with my eye")—since, I say, the discernment in question is both the discernment of the eyes and the discernment of the hearts; and, in addition, they think that, according to us, His words "Their sight does not reach Him" must be universal, like His words "but He reaches their sight," because each of the two phrases is connected with the other; then it must be true according to them, by their argument, that God is reached neither by the sight of the eyes nor by the sight of the heart, because His words "Their sight does not reach Him" are universal, like His words "but He reaches their sight." But, since this is not their belief, His words "Their sight does not reach Him" must be more particular than His words "but He reaches their

[182] See Introduction, 36.
[183] Qur'ān 6. 103.
[184] Ibid. 22. 45.
[185] Ibid. 38. 45.

sight," and their argument is self-contradictory. It may be said to them: You think that, if His words "Their sight does not reach Him" were particular at one time and not at another, His words "but He reaches their sight" would be particular at one time and not at another, and His words "nought is there like Him!,"[186] and His words "nor slumber seizeth Him nor sleep,"[187] and His words "God will not wrong men in aught"[188] would also be particular at one time and not at another;[189] wherefore if you make His words "Their sight does not reach Him" particular, your argument will turn against you. It may be said to you: If His words "Their sight does not reach Him" are particular, although the particularity of these verses is not necessary, then why do you deny that His words "Their sight does not reach Him" mean only "in this world and not in the next," just as His words "Their sight does not reach Him" mean one kind of sight and not another, although these verses, which you use as arguments against us, need not be particular? If they say, "His words 'Their sight does not reach Him' make it necessary that He be not reached by it in this world or the next world; but that is no denial of our beholding Him with our hearts and discerning Him with them; nevertheless we do not reach Him with them," the answer is: Then you have not denied that, while we do not reach Him with the sight of the eyes, at the same time it does not necessarily follow, if we do not reach Him with it, that we do not behold Him with it; and, therefore, our vision of Him with the eyes and[190] our discernment of Him with them[190] are not attainment of Him with them, just as our discernment of Him with our hearts and our vision of Him with them are not attainment of Him. If they say, "The vision of sight is the attainment of sight," the answer is: What is the difference between you and those who say that the vision of the heart and its discernment are its attainment and its comprehension? But, if the heart's knowledge of God and the heart's discernment of Him are its vision of Him, without comprehension or attainment, you have not denied that the vision of the eyes and their discernment of God may exist without comprehension or attainment.

[p. 20] *Answer.* It may be said to them: Since God's words "Their sight does not reach Him" are universal, like His words "but He reaches their sight," because each phrase is connected with the other, then tell us whether it is not true that the sight and the eyes do not reach

[186] Ibid. 42. 9.
[187] Ibid. 2. 256.
[188] Ibid. 10. 45.
[189] *E* has a slight misprint.
[190] *H*: "our discernment of Him, because they are not . . ."—a reading that gives no sense.

Him by vision, or by touch, or by taste, or in any specific way?[191] If they say yes, it may be said to them:[191] Tell us concerning His words "but He reaches their sight"—do you think that He reaches it by touch and by taste, because He touches it?[191] If they say no,[191] it may be said to them: Your belief is self-contradictory, if His words "but He reaches their sight" are general, like His words "Their sight does not reach Him."

Question. If any of them says, "Certainly real sight is the sight of the eye, not the sight of the heart," the answer is: Why do you think so, although the philologists have named the sight of the heart "sight," just as they have named the sight of the eye "sight"? If you may think as you do, others may hold the opinion that real sight is the sight of the heart, and not of the eye; and, since this is impossible, the sight must be the sight of the eye and the sight of the heart.

Answer. It may be said to them: Inform us concerning God's words "but He reaches their sight," what their meaning is. If they say, "The meaning of 'He reaches their sight' is that He knows it," the answer is: If each phrase is connected with the other and the meaning of His words "but He reaches their sight" is that He knows it, then His words "Their sight does not reach Him" must mean "It does not know Him," and this is a denial of knowledge, not of the vision of sight. Then, if they say, "The meaning of His words 'but He reaches their sight' is that He beholds it by vision; its meaning is not 'knowledge,'" the answer is: Then the sight that is in the eye can behold. If they say yes, they contradict their statement that we shall not behold with our sight anything but the sort of thing that is beheld now. If God and all things that are not of the visible kind can behold, and this is sight in the eye, then how can He behold Himself (although He is invisible) and, at the same time, not be able to show us Himself, even though He is invisible? It may be said to them: Inform us, when we behold a thing, do we actually see it or does the beholder merely behold without seeing? If they say that it is impossible for the sight that is in the eye to behold, then it may be said to them: The verse denies that sight beholds Him, but does not deny that those who have sight behold Him. God said only, "Their sight does not reach Him," but this does not prove that those who have sight shall not behold him, if the verse is taken literally.

[191] *H*: "Those whose answer is yes—it may be said to them." *H* often uses this phrase where *E* uses "if they say yes."

Chapter Containing the *Kalām* on the Doctrine that the Qur'ān is the Uncreated Word of God.[192]

If anybody asks concerning the proof that the Qur'ān is the uncreated Word of God, the answer is: The proof of it is His words "And of His signs also one is that the heavens and the earth stand firm by His command,"[193] and the command of God is [p. 21] His Word and His Speech; wherefore, since He commands them to stand firm, and they stand firm without being hurled down, their standing firm is by His command. God has also said, "Are not the creation and the command His?;"[194] and therefore all that He created is included in "the creation," because, if the use of the expression is universal, it is universal in its real meaning (and we may not remove the expression from its real meaning without argument or proof); wherefore, since He has said, "Is not the creation His?," this applies to all creation; and since He has said, "and the command," He speaks of the command as something other than all creation; and so, our account of this matter is a proof that the command of God is uncreated. If anybody says, "Has not God said, 'whoso is an enemy to God or His angels or His apostles or Gabriel or Michael' . . . ?,"[195] the answer is: We give a particular meaning to the Qur'an, by *ijmā'* and by proof, in the case of God's mentioning Himself and His angels, but not including Gabriel and Michael in the mention of the angels (although they are of the angels), but mentioning them afterwards, as though He had said, "The angels, save Gabriel and Michael," mentioning them after mentioning the angels, and so saying, "and Gabriel and Michael." Since He said, "Are not the creation and the command His?," and no proof gives a particular meaning to His words "the creation," His words "Is not the creation His?" apply to

[192] In this section al-Aš'arī repeats himself frequently. He attempts to show, on the one hand, that the Qur'ān is not created, because it has not the characteristics of a created thing and exists independently of creation, and, on the other hand, that it is eternal and uncreated because it is, in a sense, a predicate of God's, like His knowledge and His will. Most of the arguments are directed against the Jahmiyyah. Al-Aš'arī, in his treatment of this question, shows himself greatly indebted to his predecessors—particularly to Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, who by his unflinching resistance to the Miḥnah had acquired a unique authority in all orthodox discussions concerning the Word.

[193] Qur'ān 30. 24.

[194] Ibid. 7. 52. Cf. Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal's argument in Patton, op. cit. 139, 162.

[195] Qur'ān 2. 92. The point of this objection is that, if the verse here quoted and 7.52 are essentially the same, the command is a part of the creation, just as Michael and Gabriel are angels. The author, in reply, shows that the verses differ.

all creation; whereupon He says, after speaking of the creation, "and the command," and so distinguishes the command from the creation. The command of God is His word, and this makes it necessarily true that the Word of God is uncreated. God has also said, "The command is God's first and last,"[196] meaning, before He creates the creation and thereafter; and this makes it necessarily true that the command is uncreated.

Another argument. One of the things in God's Book that prove that His Word is uncreated is His words "Our word to a thing when We will it, is but to say, 'Be!' and it is."[197] Hence, if the Qur'ān were created, "Be!" would have to be said to it, and it would be; and if God said to the Word, "Be!," there would be a word to the Word. This makes one of two things necessary: either it leads to the conclusion that God's Word is uncreated; or else every word depends upon another word, *ad infinitum*, and that is impossible; and since that is impossible, it is certain and sure that God has an uncreated Word.[198]

Question. If anybody says, "The meaning of God's words that He says to it, 'Be!,' and it is, is only 'He causes it to be and it is,'" the answer is: The actual reading is that He "*says*" to it. God's Word to all things "Be!" cannot be the things themselves, because then all things would have to be the Word of God; and whoever says so tells a great lie, because it compels him to admit that everything in the world—be it men, or horses, or asses, or whatever—is the Word of God, and the error of this is plain enough.[199] Wherefore since that is impossible, it is certain that God's Word to things "Be!" is something other than they, and if it is something other than created things, the Word of God is [p. 22] beyond the possibility of being created. He who holds that the Word of God is created must hold that God is not a discourser or speaker; but that does not hold true, just as it does not hold true that the knowledge of God is created, or that God is a non-knower. Wherefore, since God is eternally a knower (for He cannot be eternally qualified with the opposite of knowledge), it is impossible for Him to be eternally qualified with the opposite of speech,[200] because the opposite of speech, with which there is no speech, is silence, or a defect, just as the opposite of knowledge, with which there is no knowledge, is ignorance, or doubt, or a defect. It is impossible for our Lord to be qualified with the opposite

[196] Ibid. 30. 3.

[197] Ibid. 16. 42.

[198] Cf. the similar argument of al-Buwayṭī (Patton, op. cit. 119).

[199] Literally, "in this is what is in it."

[200] Both texts have "knowledge," but the sense seems to require "speech."

of knowledge, and, for the same reason, it is impossible for Him to be qualified with non-speech, that is, silence and defects; and so, for the same reason, He must be eternally a discourser, just as He must be eternally a knower.

Another proof. God has said, "Say: Should the sea become ink, to write the words of my Lord, the sea would surely fail ere the words of my Lord would fail." [201] Therefore, if the seas were ink for writing, surely the seas would fail and the pens be broken; but my Lord's Words have not run out, just as God's knowledge has not run out. If any one's speech runs out, he is subject to defects, and silence comes upon him. Wherefore, since that is impossible with reference to our Lord, it is certain that He is eternally a discourser, because, if He were not a discourser, silence and defects would necessarily follow. May our Lord be far above the beliefs of the Jahmiyyah!

Section.

The Jahmiyyah have the same ideas as the Christians—because the Christians think that the womb of Mary enclosed the Word of God—and the Jahmiyyah have improved upon them, with the result that they think a created word of God descended upon a bush and the bush enclosed it; and so they are compelled to admit that the bush discourses with that word, and it is necessarily true, according to them, that a certain created thing addressed Moses, and that the bush said, "O Moses! . . . Verily I am God: there is no God but Me: therefore worship me." [202] Hence, if the Word of God had been created in a bush, it would have been *the created thing* that said, "O Moses! Verily I am God: there is no God but Me: therefore worship Me." But God has said, "But true shall be the word which hath gone forth from Me—I will surely fill hell with *jinn* and men together;" [203] and the Word of God is from God, whose Word, which is from Him, cannot be created in a created bush, just as His knowledge, which is from Him, cannot be created in something other than Himself. May God be very far above that!

Answer. It may be said to them: Just as God cannot create His will in any [p. 23] created thing, so He cannot create His Word in any created thing. If God's will were created in any created thing, it would certainly be the created thing that was the willer of it, and that is impossible. Likewise, it is impossible for God to create His Word in a created

[201] Qur'ān 18. 109. [202] Ibid. 20. 14. [203] Ibid. 32. 13.

thing, because that created thing would have to be the speaker of it, [204] and it is impossible for the Word of God to be a word belonging to a created thing.

Another proof. One of the things that invalidate their belief is the fact that God said, speaking of the polytheists, that they said, "it is merely the word of a mortal," [205] meaning the Qur'ān; wherefore, he who thinks that the Qur'ān is created makes it the word of a mortal, and this is the statement of the polytheists that God denied. Besides, if God had not uttered words until He had created the creation, then had uttered words thereafter, things would have existed otherwise than as the result of His command and of His words, and He would not have said to them, "Be!," and this is a rejection of the Qur'ān and a departure from that upon which the vast majority of the people of Islām agree.

Section.

Know that, by the belief of the Jahmiyyah that the Word of God is created, they are compelled to admit that God would have been from all eternity like the idols, which have neither speech nor language, if He had been from all eternity a non-discourser, because God says of Abraham, that he said to his people, when they said to him, "Who hath done this to our gods, O Abraham?," [206] "Nay, their chief hath done it, but ask ye them if they can speak;" [207] wherefore he argued against them that idols, since they have neither speech nor language, are not gods, and that a god cannot be a non-speaker or a non-discourser; wherefore, since the idols, which God might, if He wished, bring to life and cause to speak, are not gods, how can one with reference to whom speech is impossible from eternity be a god? May God be very far above that! Since God cannot be, from eternity, on a level lower than that of the idols, which have no language, He must be eternally a discourser.

Another proof. God has said, speaking of Himself, that He says, "With whom shall the kingship be on that day?," [208] and there are traditions to the effect that He speaks these words and no answer is made to Him. Hence He says, "With God, the One, the Almighty." [209] Wherefore, since God speaks notwithstanding the disappearance of

[204] Cf. the argument of Muḥammad ibn Aslam (Patton, op. cit. 38, 40): either God spoke by an uncreated Word, or it was a created word, and not God, that spoke.

[205] Qur'ān 74. 25.

[206] Ibid. 21. 60.

[207] Ibid. 21. 64.

[208] Ibid. 40. 16.

[209] L. c.

created things, when there are not men or angels or animals or *jānn* or trees or clods of clay, it is certain that the Word of God is outside creation, because it exists although no created thing exists.

[p. 24] *Another proof.* God has said, "and discoursing did God discourse with Moses."[210] Discourse is intercourse by speech. The speech of the Discourser cannot inhere in something other than Himself or be created in anything except Himself, just as this is impossible with respect to knowledge.

Another proof. God has said, "Say: He is God alone: God the eternal! He begetteth not, and He is not begotten, and there is none like unto him."[211] Then how can the Qur'ān be created, when the name of God is in the Qur'ān? for this makes it necessarily true that the names of God are created, and if His names were created, His unity would be created, and likewise His knowledge and His power. May God be very far above that!

Another proof. God has said, "Blessed be the name of thy Lord,"[212] but "Blessed be" is not said of a created thing; wherefore this is a proof that the names of God are uncreated. He also said, "the face of thy Lord shall abide;"[213] wherefore, just as the face of our Lord cannot be created, so His names are not created.

Another proof. God has said, "God witnesseth that there is no god but He: and the angels, and men endued with knowledge, stablished in righteousness. . . ."[214] Undoubtedly He bears this witness and hears it from Himself, because, if He hears it from a created thing, it is no witness of His; but since it is a witness of His, and He has borne it, the only alternatives are that He bore it before created things came into existence, or after created things came into existence; wherefore, if He bore it after created things came into existence, His witness to Himself cannot be reconciled with the divine source of creation; and how can that be the case? for it would then necessarily be true that nobody[215] bore witness to the divine unity prior to creation; and if the witness to the divine oneness before the existence of creation were impossible, the proof of the existence of the divine unity would be impossible, and it would be impossible for God to be one prior to creation, because that regarding which witness is impossible, is itself impossible; but if His witness to His own unity is prior to creation, it is out of the question that His Word should be created, because His Word is His witness.

[210] Ibid. 4. 162.
[211] Ibid. 112.
[212] Ibid. 55. 78.
[213] Ibid. 55. 27.
[214] Ibid. 3. 16.
[215] *E*: نشهد به شاهدا. Correct, with Dr. Della Vida, to يشهد به شاهد.

Another proof. One of the things that prove that the belief of the Jahmiyyah is null and void, and that the Qur'ān is the uncreated Word of God, is the fact that the names of God are from the Qur'ān. God has said, "Praise the name of thy Lord, the Most High, who hath created and balanced,"[216] and "the name of thy Lord, the Most High, who hath created and balanced" cannot be created, just as "the majesty of our Lord" cannot be created; for God has said, in the Sūrah of the Jinn, "may the majesty of our Lord be exalted!,"[217] and just as His might cannot be created, so His Word cannot be created.

Another proof. God has said, "It is not for mortal man that God should speak with him but by vision or [p. 25] from behind a veil: or, He sendeth a messenger to reveal, by His permission, what He wishes;"[218] wherefore, if the Word of God were not found except in created form in a created thing, there would be no meaning in this limitation of the vehicles of revelation, because all creation would hear the Word and find it, on the supposition of the Jahmiyyah, created in something other than God; and this would perforce deprive the Prophets of all distinction. But it is necessarily true, according to them, since they think that God created His Word to Moses in a bush, that they who hear the Word of God from angels, or from a prophet who has brought it from God, are on a higher level, so far as the hearing of the Word is concerned, than Moses, because they have heard it from a prophet, and Moses did not hear it from God, but only from a bush; and they must think that the Jew, since he hears the Word of God from a prophet, is on a higher level, so far as this is concerned, than Moses ibn 'Imrān, because the Jew has heard it from one of the prophets of God and Moses heard it in created form in a bush; and also, if it had existed in created form in a bush, He would not have discoursed with Moses from behind a veil, because such *jinn* and men as were present at the bush would have heard the Word from that place, and the course pursued by Moses and others under those circumstances would have been evil, inasmuch as he did not receive the Word of God from behind a veil.

Answer. Then it may be said to them: Since you think that the meaning of God's addressing Moses is that He created a word with which He addressed him, and God also created, according to you, a word in the joint (for the joint said to the Apostle of God, "Eat me not, for I am poisoned!"),[219] then you must admit that this word that the Prophet

[216] Qur'ān 87. 1, 2.
[217] Ibid. 72. 3.
[218] Ibid. 42. 50, 51.
[219] See Ibn Sa'd, ed. Sachau I I 113: "The Prophet was not accustomed to eat what was offered as alms (*ṣadaqah*), but he would eat what was given as a gift. A Jewess presented him with a roast sheep . . . but it said, 'I am poisoned.'"

heard is the Word of God. But if God cannot have discoursed by that created word, you do not deny that it is impossible for God to create His Word in a bush, because the word of the created thing is not a Word. Therefore, if it is the Word of God, and the meaning of God's discoursing, according to you, is that He created the Word, you must admit that God discoursed by a word He created in the joint. Then, if they reply to this, the answer is: According to your belief, then, it is God who says, "Eat me not, for I am poisoned!" May God be very far above your belief and your calumny against Him! And if they say, "God's Word cannot exist in created form in a joint," the answer is: And, for the same reason, God's Word cannot exist in created form in a bush.

[p. 26] *Answer.* Furthermore, when they ask concerning the word with which God gave the wolf [220] utterance when it spoke concerning the prophecy of the Prophet, it may be said to them: If God discourses by a word He creates in something other than Himself, you do not deny that the word he heard from the wolf is a Word of God's, and its unnatural eloquence proves that it is the Word of God (and it necessarily follows, according to them, that the wolf himself did not discourse by it, and that it is the Word of God, because the existence of the Word on the part of the wolf is unnatural, just as its existence on the part of the bush is unnatural); wherefore, if the wolf discourses by that made word, you do not deny that the bush discourses by the Word, if it is created in a bush, and that it is the created thing [221] that says,[221] "O Moses! I truly am God." [222] May God be very far above that!

Answer. Furthermore, one may say to them: Since the Word of God exists in created form in something other than Himself, according to you, does this not make you believe that every word you hear in created form in a thing [223] is fit to be [223] a Word of God's? Wherefore, if they say, "The bush is not a discourser because the discourser can be only a living being," the answer is: And the creation of the Word in a bush is impossible because he in whom the Word is created can be only a living being; and therefore, if the Word can be created in that which is inanimate, why cannot one who is inanimate discourse? It may also be said to them: Do you not believe that one who is inanimate speaks, because He has said that the heavens and the earth "both said, 'We come obedient'"? [224]

[220] The wolf whose eloquent homily made a Muslim of Ahbān ibn Aws. See ad-Damīrī, *Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān* tr. Jayakar (1906-8) I 841.
[221] So *H. E*: "just as He has said."
[222] Qur'ān 28. 30. [223] *H*: "is truly." [224] Qur'ān 41. 10.

Answer. Furthermore, it may be said to them: Has not God said to Iblīs, "and lo! My ban shall be upon thee till the day of reckoning"? [225] Then they will certainly answer yes, and it may be said to them: Hence, since the Word of God is a created thing, and created things come to an end, you are compelled to admit, if God brings things to an end, that the ban upon Iblīs has been brought to an end, and thus Iblīs is unbanned; and this is a forsaking of the Religion of the Muslims, and a rejection of the words of God "and lo! My ban shall be upon thee till the day of reckoning." But since the ban remains upon Iblīs until the day of reckoning, which is the day of recompense, the day of resurrection (because God has said, "King in the day of reckoning," [226] meaning, the day of recompense), and thereafter it is eternally in Hell, and the ban is the Word of God, which is His words "My ban shall be upon thee," then it necessarily follows that the Word of God cannot come to an end, and that it is uncreated; because non-existence is possible with reference to created things, and, therefore, since it is impossible with reference to the Word of God, the latter is uncreated.

Reply to the Jahmiyyah.[227]

Furthermore, it may be said to them: Since God's anger is uncreated, and likewise His satisfaction and His wrath, why do you not believe [p. 27] that His Word is uncreated? for he who thinks that God's anger is created must admit that God's anger and His wrath against the infidels come to an end, and that His satisfaction in the angels and the prophets comes to an end, so that He is no longer satisfied with His friends nor angry with His enemies; and this is a departure from Islām. It may also be said: Tell us about God's words "Our word to a thing when We will it is but to say, 'Be!' and it is." [228] Do you think that His Word to the thing, "Be!," is something created by God's will? Wherefore, if they say no, the answer is: Then you do not deny that the Word of God, which is the Qur'ān, is uncreated, just as you think that God's Word to the thing, "Be!," is uncreated. But if they think that God's Word to the thing, "Be!," is created, the answer is: Then if you think it is a thing created by will, God says, "Our word to a thing when We will it is but to say, 'Be!,' and it is;" and so you must admit that He has

[225] Ibid. 38. 79. [226] Ibid. 1. 3.
[227] Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal wrote a book entitled Reply to the Jahmiyyah (Patton, op. cit. 19).
[228] Qur'ān 16. 42. The verse appears again in this passage a few lines below, preceded by فقل, which cannot be construed intelligibly. In the translation I have adopted Dr. Della Vida's emendation to فقد.

already said, "Be!" to His Word to the thing, "Be!," and this compels you to choose one of two alternatives: either that God's Word to what is not Himself, "Be!," is uncreated, or else that each word has another word *ad infinitum*, and that is impossible. Therefore, if they say that God has an uncreated Word, the answer is: Then you do not deny that God's willing of faith is uncreated. Furthermore, it may be said to them: For what reason do you say that God's Word to the thing, "Be!," is uncreated? Wherefore, if they say, "Because 'Be!' is not said to the Word," it may be said to them: The Qur'ān also is uncreated, because it is the Word of God and God does not say to His Word, "Be!"

Reply to the Jahmiyyah.

It may also be said to them: Is not God eternally cognizant of His friends and his enemies? They will certainly answer yes. The answer is: Then do you say, "He is eternally a willer of the separation of His friends and His enemies"? Then, if they say yes, the answer is: Since the will of God is eternal, it is uncreated, and since His will is uncreated, why do you not believe that His Word is uncreated? But if they say, "We do not say He is eternally a willer of the separation of His friends and His enemies," then they think that God does not will the separation of His friends and His enemies, and ascribe deficiency to Him. May He be very far above the belief of the Qadariyyah!

Answer. It may be said to them that the created thing either is a certain body—a certain person—or is one of the qualifications of persons. Now, the Word of God cannot be a person, because eating, drinking, and marriage are possible with respect to persons, but those things are impossible with respect to the Word of God; and also the Word of God cannot be a qualification of a created person's, for [p. 28] qualifications do not survive the twinkling of an eye, because they are not capable of survival, and the Word of God would have to come to an end and pass away. Therefore, since it cannot be a person, or a qualification of a person, it cannot be created, inasmuch as persons can die; and therefore he who asserts that the Word of God is a created person must admit that death is possible with reference to the Word of God; but that is an impossible thing. Besides, the Word of God cannot be created in a created person, just as it cannot be a qualification of a created person's; and if it were created in a person, like the speech of man, made in him, the distinction between the Word of God and the speech of creatures would be impossible, since they would both be created in a created person—just as His knowledge cannot be created in a created person.

Answer. It may also be said to them: If the Word of God were created, it would certainly be a bodily organism, or a qualification of a bodily organism's; and if it were a bodily organism, it could be a discourser, for God has power to change such things. They cannot escape this argument, and, according to their view, they must consider it possible for God to change the Qur'ān into man or *jinn* or devil. (May God be too exalted for His Word to be thus!) But if it is a qualification of a bodily organism's, like other qualifications, and therefore God has the capacity to make them bodies, then, according to their view, the Jahmiyyah must consider it possible for God to make the Qur'ān a body with bodily functions, eating and drinking, and to make it a man, and cause him to die; but this is impossible as regards God's Word!

Chapter Containing the Traditions Cited Concerning the Qur'ān.[229]

Question. Abū Bakr[230] says, I and al-'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-'Aẓīm al-'Anbarī went to Abū 'Abdallāh, and al-'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-'Aẓīm questioned Abū 'Abdallāh Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal,[231] and so he said to him, Some people here have newly arisen, saying, The Qur'ān is neither created nor uncreated. These are more harmful to men than the Jahmiyyah. Woe to you! Wherefore, if you say not uncreated, then say created. Abū 'Abdallāh said, These are a wicked lot. Al-'Abbās said, What is your belief, O Abū 'Abdallāh? He said, In my creed and *maḏhab* there is no doubt that the Qur'ān is uncreated. Then he said, Who has doubts concerning this? Then Abū 'Abdallāh discoursed, wondering greatly at doubt concerning this, and so he said, Is there doubt concerning this? God has said, "Are not the creation and the command His?;"[232] and He has said, "The Merciful hath taught the Qur'ān, hath created man."[233] And so he distinguished between man and the Qur'ān; wherefore he said, "taught, created," and kept repeating it, "taught, created," that is, he distinguished between them. Abū 'Abdallāh said, The Qur'ān is from God's knowledge.[234] Do you not agree that He says,

[229] Aḥmad, in his letter on the Qur'ān, has a similar string of traditions directed against speculation about the Book.

[230] Probably Ibn Abī Šaybah (died ca. 848), mentioned below. Since the Muslim year does not coincide with the Christian year, the dates assigned to the traditionists are only approximately correct. Besides, in many instances, several dates are given in the sources. The works at my disposal have yielded dates for only about two-thirds of the traditionists mentioned in the *Ibānah*. The dates of the remaining third can frequently be inferred from the other dates in the *isnāds*.

[231] Died 855. [232] Qur'ān 7. 52. [233] Ibid. 55. 1, 2.

[234] Aḥmad makes the same statement in his letter (Patton, op. cit. 162; see also ibid. 101).

"He taught the Qur'ān"? In the Qur'ān are the names of God. What is the belief of these people? Do they not believe that the names of God are uncreated, that God is eternally powerful, [p. 29] knowing, strong, wise, hearing, seeing? We do not doubt that the names of God are uncreated, we do not doubt that God's knowledge is uncreated. The Qur'ān is from God's knowledge and in it are the names of God; wherefore we do not doubt that it is uncreated. It is the Word of God and He discourses by it eternally. Then he said, And what infidelity is greater than this? or what infidelity is worse than this? Since they think that the Qur'ān is created, then they must think that the names of God are created and that God's knowledge is created, only people treat the matter lightly and say, "All that they say is, 'The Qur'ān is created,' and they are joking," and consider it a joke and are not aware of its seriousness, for it is infidelity. But I am unwilling to reveal this to anyone. They ask and I am unwilling to speak on this matter and so it has come to my knowledge that they proclaim that I am close-mouthed. Wherefore I said to him, Then he who says, The Qur'ān is created, and does not say that the names of God are created, or that His knowledge is created, and does not explain himself further—I say, he is an infidel. He said, So he is, according to us. Then Abū 'Abdallāh said, We do not need to doubt concerning this Qur'ān. According to us, in it are the names of God, and it is from God's knowledge; and so he who says to us that it is created is an infidel, according to us. I started to refute him. Al-'Abbās, who was listening, said to me, Is not this more than enough for you? Abū' Abdallāh said, It certainly is.

Al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Abd al-Awwal cites the following tradition: I heard Wakī' [235] say, He who says, The Qur'ān is created, is an apostate who should be urged to repent. If he repents, well; and if not, he is to be put to death.

Muḥammad ibn aṣ-Ṣabbāḥ al-Bazzār [236] cites the following tradition: 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Sufyān said, I heard Ibn al-Mubārak [237] say, We are able to relate the discussions of the Jews and the Christians, but we are not able to relate the discussions of the Jahmiyyah. Muḥammad said: [238] Saying,[239] We fear lest we be infidels unwittingly.

Hārūn ibn Isḥāq al-Hamdānī cites the following tradition on the authority of Abū Nu'aym, and he on the authority of Sulaymān ibn 'Īsā al-Qārī, and he on the authority of Sufyān aṯ-Ṯawrī,[240] who said,

[235] Died 812.
[236] Or al-Bazzāz (died 841).
[237] Probably 'Abdallāh (died 797).
[238] Muḥammad added these words on his own authority.
[239] *H*: "You say."
[240] Died 777.

Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān [241] said to me, Go tell Abū Ḥanīfah,[242] the polytheist, that I repudiate him! Said Sulaymān, Sufyān added, Because he was in the habit of saying, The Qur'ān is created.

Sufyān ibn Wakī' [243] cites the following tradition: I heard 'Umar ibn Ḥammād ibn Abī Ḥanīfah say, My father told me, The speech whereof Ibn Abī Laylā [244] urged Abū Ḥanīfah to repent was his saying, The Qur'ān is created. He said, And so he repented of it and advertised the fact universally, said my father, and so I said to him, How did you come to this? He said, I feared, by God, that he would fall upon me, and so I used dissimulation towards him.

Hārūn ibn Isḥāq cites the following tradition: I heard Ismā'īl ibn Abi 'l-Ḥakam cite, on the authority of 'Umar ibn 'Ubayd aṭ-Ṭanāfisī, the tradition that Ḥammād, that is, Ibn Abī Sulaymān, sent to Abū Ḥanīfah the message, I have nothing to do with what you say, except you repent. Ibn Abī 'Inabah was with him, said he, and so he said, Your neighbor informed me that Abū Ḥanīfah tried to convert him to that whereof he had been urged to repent by him, after he had been urged to repent.

A tradition is cited on the authority of Abū Yūsuf,[245] in which he says: I watched Abū Ḥanīfah [p. 30] two months until he abandoned the createdness of the Qur'ān.

Sulaymān ibn Ḥarb [246] says, The Qur'ān is uncreated. Passages of His Book tell of it. God said, "God will not speak to them and will not look on them." [247] The word of God and His regard are one, that is, uncreated.

Ḥusayn ibn 'Abd al-Awwal cites the following tradition: Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn Abī Yazīd al-Hamdānī said, on the authority of 'Amr ibn Qays, and he on the authority of Abū Qays al-Malā'ī, and he on the authority of 'Aṭiyyah,[248] and he on the authority of Abū Sa'īd al-Ḫudrī,[249] The Apostle of God said, The Word of God is as superior to other words as God is superior to His creation. Hence this proves that the Qur'ān is the Word of God, and what is the Word of God is not a creature of God's. God has explained that the Qur'ān is His Word by His words "that he may hear the word of God." [250] There is proof of it in various passages of His Book. God has spoken, saying that "discoursing did God discourse with Moses." [251]

[241] Died 738.
[242] Died 767.
[243] Died 861.
[244] Muḥammad (died 765).
[245] Died 798.
[246] Died ca. 838.
[247] Qur'ān 3. 71.
[248] Probably Ibn Qays (died 738).
[249] Died 693.
[250] Qur'ān 9. 6.
[251] Ibid. 4. 162.

Wakī' relates a tradition on the authority of al-A'maš,[252] and he on the authority of Ḥayṯamah, and he on the authority of 'Adī ibn Ḥātim,[253] who said, The Apostle of God said, There is none of you whose Lord will not address him without the intervention of an interpreter.

One of the things that explain that God is a discourser and that He possesses a Word is what 'Affān [254] relates: Ḥammād ibn Salamah [255] said on the authority of al-Aš'aṯ al-Ḥarrānī, and he on the authority of Šahr ibn Ḥawšab, The Word of God is as superior to other words as God is superior to His creation.

Ya'lā ibn al-Minhāl as-Sa'dī relates the following tradition: Isḥāq ibn Sulaymān ar-Rāzī [256] said, Al-Jarrāḥ ibn aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk al-Kindī said, on the authority of 'Alqamah ibn Marṯad,[257] and he on the authority of Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān as-Sulamī,[258] and he on the authority of 'Uṯmān ibn 'Affān, The Apostle of God said, The best of you is he who is learned in the Qur'ān and its science, and he said that the Qur'ān was as superior to other words as God is superior to His creation—and that means that it is from Him.

Sunayd ibn Dāwūd cites the following tradition: Abū Sufyān quoted on the authority of Ma'mar,[259] and he on the authority of Qatādah,[260] God's words "If all the trees that are upon the earth were to become pens, and if God should after swell the sea into seven seas of ink, His words would not be exhausted" [261]—the verse.

Hārūn ibn Ma'rūf cites the following tradition: Jarīr ibn Manṣūr quoted, on the authority of Hilāl ibn Yasāf, what Farwah ibn Nawfal [262] said: I was a neighbor to Ḥabbāb ibn al-Aratt.[263] He said to me, Ho there! offer to God what you can. Nothing can be offered to God dearer to Him than His Word.

It is related on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās [264] that, regarding God's words "an Arabic Qur'ān, free from tortuous wording," [265] he said, Uncreated.

Al-Layṯ ibn Yaḥyā cites the following tradition: Ibrāhīm ibn al-Aš'aṯ told me, I heard Mu'ammal ibn Ismā'īl say on the authority of aṯ-Ṯawrī, He who thinks that the Qur'ān is created is an infidel.

The traditions on the authority of Ja'far ibn Muḥammad [266] that the

[252] Died ca. 765.
[253] Died 686.
[254] Probably Ibn Muslim (died ca. 825).
[255] Died 784.
[256] Died ca. 815.
[257] Died 737.
[258] Died 693.
[259] Perhaps Ibn Rāšid (died 769).
[260] Died 735.
[261] Qur'ān 31. 26.
[262] Died 661.
[263] Died 657.
[264] Died 687.
[265] Qur'ān 39. 29.
[266] Died 765.

Qur'ān is not a creator and not created, are sound. He related them on the authority of his paternal uncle, Zayd ibn 'Alī,[267] and on the authority of his grandfather 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn [268] [p. 31].

The *'ulamā'* and the transmitters of the *āṯār* and the *aḫbār* traditionists who say that the Qur'ān is uncreated, and that he who says it is created is an infidel, are too many to count. Among them are the two Ḥammāds,[269] aṯ-Ṯawrī, 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Abī Salamah, Mālik ibn Anas,[270] aš-Šāfi'ī [271] and his followers, al-Layṯ ibn Sa'd,[272] Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah,[273] Hišām,[274] 'Īsā ibn Yūnus,[275] Ḥafṣ ibn Ġayyāṯ,[276] Sa'd ibn 'Āmir, 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī,[277] Abū Bakr ibn 'Ayyāš,[278] Wakī', Abū 'Āṣim an-Nabīl,[279] Ya'lā ibn 'Ubayd,[280] Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf, Bišr ibn al-Mufaḍḍal,[281] 'Abdallāh ibn Dāwūd,[282] Sallām ibn Abī Muṭī', Ibn al-Mubārak, 'Alī ibn 'Āṣim,[283] Aḥmad ibn Yūnus, Abū Nu'aym, Qabīṣah ibn 'Uqbah,[284] Sulaymān ibn Dāwūd, Abū 'Ubayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām,[285] Yazīd ibn Hārūn,[286] and others. If we continued the citation of those who hold that doctrine, the discourse would be long in the citation of them. Those we have mentioned will suffice. We have now argued for the validity of our belief that the Qur'ān is uncreated, from God's Book and such evidence and proof as it contains. We have not found any scholar, on whose authority the *āṯār* are transmitted or the *aḫbār* related, or who ranks as an authority, believing that the Qur'ān is created. Only worthless and very ignorant people, whose belief is without authority, believe it. The arguments we have given above concerning the matter are fatal to most of their beliefs, and the falsity of the latter is rejected.

[267] Died ca. 740.
[268] Died 712.
[269] De Slane (op. cit. II 127) concludes that Ibn Salamah and Ibn Zayd (died 795) are the two Ḥammāds. The two Ḥammāds mentioned in the *Ibānah* are Ibn Salamah and Ibn Abī Sulaymān.
[270] Died 795.
[271] Died 820.
[272] Died 791.
[273] Died 814.
[274] Probably Ibn 'Urwah (died 763).
[275] Perhaps as-Sabī'ī (died 806).
[276] Died 811.
[277] Died 813.
[278] Died 808.
[279] Died 827.
[280] Died 824.
[281] Died 802.
[282] Died ca. 826.
[283] Died 816.
[284] Died ca. 829.
[285] Died ca. 837.
[286] Died 821.

Chapter Containing the *Kalām* Concerning Those Who Suspend Judgment Upon the Qur'ān and Say, "I Do Not Say, 'It Is Created;' nor Do I Say, 'It Is Uncreated.'" [287]

Answer.[288] It may be said to them: Why do you think and believe that? Then, if they say, "We believe it because God does not say in His Book that it is created, neither does the Apostle of God say so, nor do the Muslims agree unanimously that it is so; and God does not say in His Book, 'It is uncreated,' neither does His Apostle say so, nor do the Muslims agree unanimously that it is so; and, therefore, we suspend judgment on it, and do not say, 'It is created,' or, 'It is uncreated'"— if they say this, it may be said to them: Does God say to you in His Book, "Suspend judgment on it," and "Thou dost[289] not say, 'uncreated;'" or does God's Apostle say to you, "Refrain from saying, 'It is uncreated;'" or do the Muslims agree unanimously that one should refrain from saying that it is uncreated? Then, if they say yes, they lie; but, if they say no, the answer is: Then do not refrain from saying "uncreated," by the same sort of proof as that by which you have imposed restraint upon yourselves.[290] After this, it may be said to them: Why do you deny that God's Book contains proof that the Qur'ān is uncreated? If they say, "We have not found it," the answer is: Why do you think, simply because you have not found it in the Qur'ān, [p. 32] that it is not to be found there? Then, we will see that they find it, and read them the verses upon which we base our argument in this our book, and prove our case that the Qur'ān is uncreated: such as His words "Are not the creation and the command His?;"[291] and His words "Our word to a thing when We will it is but to say to it, 'Be!' and it is;"[292] and His words "Say: Should the sea become ink to write the words of my Lord;"[293] and the other verses of the Qur'ān we have used as proofs concerning it. It may also be said to them: This principle compels you to suspend judgment regarding everything about which people disagree, and you must not make up your minds too hastily concerning that question; and therefore, if you may believe some of the interpretations of the Muslims when a proof demonstrates their soundness, why do you not believe that the Qur'ān is uncreated, on the basis of the arguments we have cited above in this book of ours?

[287] In the *Maqālāt* (153) al-Aš'arī speaks of this attitude as having been adopted by some of the Murji'ah. It was also to be found among the Mu'tazilah (ibid. 582 ff.).

[288] The argument here advanced recalls the first of the three answers in the *risālah* on the *kalām*. See above, 29.

[289] No doubt the jussive plural is to be read here, and the meaning is "Do not say, 'uncreated.'" The reading of the text is a misprint.

[290] Up to this point, in the present chapter, al-Aš'arī has simply proved that there is nothing to forbid the use of the term "uncreated." He now goes on to show, against his opponents, that the Book itself contains proof of its uncreatedness. In the following paragraphs he discusses certain ancillary questions, which have no obvious connection with the attitude of suspended judgment mentioned in the chapter heading.

[291] Qur'ān 7. 52.

[292] Ibid. 16. 42.

Question. If anybody says, "Tell us, do you believe that God's Word is on the Preserved Table?," the answer is: That is what we believe, because God has said, "Yet it is a glorious Qur'ān, written on the Preserved Table"[294] (and therefore the Qur'ān is on the Preserved Table); and it is in the breasts of those whom the knowledge has reached (God has said, "but it is a clear sign in the breasts of those whom the knowledge hath reached"); [295] and it is read by the tongues (God has said, "Move not thy tongue in haste").[296] The Qur'ān is really written in our books, really preserved in our breasts, really read by our tongues, and really heard by us (as He has said: "grant him an asylum, that he may hear the word of God").[297]

Question.[298] If he says, "Tell us about the utterance (*lafẓ*) of the Qur'ān, what do you believe concerning it?," the answer is: The Qur'ān is really read and recited, but it may not be said to be uttered, because one may not say that it is an uttered word (for, when an Arab says, "I have uttered the morsel from my mouth," his meaning is "I have cast it forth") and the Word of God is not said to be uttered, but only to be read, recited, written, and memorized. Certain people[299] say, "We have uttered the Qur'ān," only that they may assert that it is created, and give

[293] Ibid. 18. 109.

[294] Ibid. 85. 21, 22.

[295] Ibid. 29. 48.

[296] Ibid. 75. 16.

[297] Ibid. 9. 6.

[298] Al-Buḫārī distinguished between the uncreated Qur'ān and the created *lafẓ* (Patton, op. cit. 34 f.), as did Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. Al-Aš'arī, as the present argument shows, sees the danger of allowing a free use of the verb "utter" in connection with the Qur'ān. Like his predecessors, he was content with the distinction between the uncreated Word and the created acts of human beings in relation to it, and regarded as innovation any further inquiry into the implications of this distinction. Later orthodoxy was less cautious than the Master; e. g. al Faḍālī speaks of the *lafẓ* as "created and written on the Preserved Table" (Macdonald, op. cit. 335). Wensinck says: "Probably the idea of the pre-existence of the Kuran was supported by the popular representation of the preserved table" (The Muslim Creed, 151).

[299] The Mu'tazilah were divided on the question of the utterance of the Qur'ān (*Maqālāt* 225).

a specious appearance to their innovation and their doctrine of its createdness; and so they conceal their infidelity from those who do not apprehend their meaning. But, since we apprehend their meaning, we deny their belief. Also, it may not be said, "A part of the Qur'ān is created," because the Qur'ān in its entirety is uncreated.

Question. If anybody says, "Has not God said, 'Every fresh warning that cometh to them from their Lord they only hear to mock it'?," [300] the answer is: The warning God means is not the Qur'ān, but the discourse of the Apostle and his threat to them; for God said to His Prophet, "yet warn them, for verily warning will profit the faithful;" [301] and God also said, "a warning, an apostle," [302] [p. 33] thus calling the Apostle "a warning." The Apostle is also "a fresh warning;" for God also said, "Every fresh warning that cometh to them from their Lord they only hear to mock it," telling us that every fresh warning that comes to them they only hear to mock it; but He did not say, "There comes not to them a warning except it be fresh," and, since He does not say this, it is not necessarily true that the Qur'ān is fresh (for if anybody were to say, "No Tamīmī comes to them, summoning them to the truth, without their opposing him," one would not have to say, "Nobody except a Tamīmī comes to them"); and the same holds true of that about which they ask us.

Question. If they ask us concerning God's words "an Arabic Qur'ān," [303] the answer is: God sent it down and it is not created. Therefore, if they say, "God has said, 'And we have sent down iron. Dire evil resideth in it,' [304] and iron is created," the answer is: Iron is a perishable body; and it is not necessarily true that the Qur'ān, since it is sent down, is a perishable body; and, for the same reason, it is not necessarily true that the Qur'ān, since it is sent down, is created, even though iron is created.

Answer. It may be said to them: God has commanded us to take refuge in Him, who is uncreated, and He commands us to take refuge in the perfect Words of God; [305] and, since we are not commanded to take refuge in a certain created thing, but He commands us to take refuge in the Word of God, the Word of God must be uncreated.

[300] Qur'ān 21. 2.
[301] Ibid. 51. 55.
[302] Ibid. 65. 11.
[303] Ibid. 39. 29.
[304] Ibid. 57. 25.
[305] Ibid. 16.100: "When thou readest the Qur'ān, take refuge with God against Satan, the stoned."

Chapter Containing the Discussion Concerning God's Being Seated on the Throne.[306]

If anybody says, "What do you say regarding God's being seated on the Throne?," the answer is: We say that God is seated on His Throne, as He has said, "The Merciful is seated on the Throne." [307] God has also said, "The good word riseth up to Him;" [308] and, "but God took him up to Himself;" [309] and, "From the heaven to the earth He governeth all things; hereafter shall they come up to Him." [310] He has also said, quoting Pharaoh: "O, Haman! build for me a tower that I may reach the avenues, the avenues of the heavens, and may mount to the God of Moses, for I verily deem Him a liar;" [311] and so Pharaoh gave the lie to Moses, the prophet of God, for saying that God was above the heavens. God has also said, "What! are you sure that He who is in heaven will not cleave the earth beneath you?" [312] Now the Throne is above the heavens; wherefore, since the Throne is above the heavens, He said, "What! are you sure that He who is in heaven . . .?," because He is seated on the Throne, which is above the heavens, for all that which is on high is heaven, and, therefore, the Throne is the highest thing in the heavens. Also, when He says, "What! are you sure that He who is in heaven . . .?," He does not mean all the heavens, but has in mind only the Throne, which is the highest thing in the heavens. Do you not agree that God is speaking of the heavens when He says, "and He appointed . . . the moon," [p. 34] in them, "for light," [313] yet He does not mean that the moon fills them entirely, and that it is in them entirely? Then, too, see the Muslims all raising their hands, when they pray, towards heaven, because God is seated on the Throne, which is

[306] See references to "throne" in Wensinck, op. cit. Al-Aš'arī's successors really abandoned the belief he had held. Al-Ġazālī, to cite one instance, says: "Lo, He is seated firmly upon His Throne (*arsh*), after the manner which He has said, and in the sense in which He willed a being seated firmly (*istiwa*), which is far removed from contact and fixity of location and being established and being enveloped and being removed. The Throne does not carry Him, but the Throne and those that carry it are carried by the grace of His power and mastered by His grasp. He is above the Throne and the Heavens and above everything unto the limit of the Pleiades, with an aboveness which does not bring Him nearer to the Throne and the Heavens, just as it does not make Him further from the earth and the Pleiades" (Macdonald, op. cit. 301). For an example of anthropomorphism in this connection see the Šī'ite discussion as to whether the bearers of the Throne bear the Throne or the Creator (*Maqālāt* 35). For traditions see Wensinck, Handbook 18.
[307] Qur'ān 20. 4.
[308] Ibid. 35. 11.
[309] Ibid. 4. 156.
[310] Ibid. 32. 4.
[311] Ibid. 40. 38, 39.
[312] Ibid. 67. 16.
[313] Ibid. 10. 5.

above the heavens; but, if God were not upon the Throne, they would not raise their hands towards the Throne, just as they do not lower them, when they pray, to the earth.

Question. Some of the Mu'tazilah[314] and the Jahmiyyah and the Ḥarūriyyah have said that God's words "The Merciful is seated on the Throne"[315] mean that He has the mastery and reigns and exercises power, and that God is in every place, and they deny that God is on His Throne, as the true believers say, and hold the opinion, regarding God's being seated, that it is God's power. But, if this were as they put it, there would be no difference between the Throne and the earth; for God has power over the earth and over gardens[316] and over everything in the world; and, therefore, if God were seated on the Throne in the sense of having the mastery, since He has the mastery over all things, He would certainly be seated on the Throne and on the earth and on heaven and on gardens and on each separate thing, because He has power over created things, possessing the mastery over them. But, since He has power over all things, and no Muslim regards it as right to say that God is seated on the gardens and on the waste, God's being seated on the Throne cannot mean His having the mastery that is common to all things; and it is necessarily true that its meaning is a being seated that belongs particularly to the Throne and not to all things. But the Mu'tazilah[317] and the Ḥarūriyyah and the Jahmiyyah think that God is in every place; and so they are compelled to admit that He is in the womb of Mary and in gardens and the waste; and this is contrary to the Religion. May God be exalted above their belief!

Answer. It may be said to them: If He is not seated on the Throne (in the sense of the Throne particularly, and not anything else, as the scholars and the *āṯār* traditionists and those who relate the *aḫbār* say), but is in every place, then He is under the earth, over which the heaven is; and if He is under the earth and the earth above Him and the heaven above the earth, then this compels you to believe that God is under the depth, and created things are above Him, and that He is above the height, and created things are below Him; and if this is true He must be under that above which He is and above that under which He is,

[314] See *Maqālāt* 157.

[315] Qur'ān 20. 4.

[316] Understand "latrines" here and below.

[317] *Maqālāt* 157: "The belief regarding the place: The Mu'tazilah disagree concerning it. Some say, 'The Creator is in every place in the sense that He controls every place and that His control is in every place.' The vast majority of the Mu'tazilah believe this. . . . Others say, 'The Creator is not in a place, but He is upon that upon which He has eternally been.'"

and this is impossible and self-contradictory. May God be very far above your calumny against Him!

Another proof. Among the things that make it certain that God is seated upon His Throne, and not upon all created things, is the tradition quoted by the traditionists on the authority of the Apostle of God[318] [p. 35]. 'Affān[319] relates it on the authority of Ḥammād ibn Salamah,[320] who said, 'Amr ibn Dīnār[321] told us, on the authority of Nāfi' ibn Jubayr,[322] and he on the authority of his father, that the Prophet said, "God descends every night to the lower heaven and says, 'Is there any who has a request? and I will grant it him. Is there any who asks forgiveness? and I will forgive him,'—until the dawn arrives."

'Abdallāh ibn Bakr[323] relates the following tradition: Hišām ibn Abī 'Abdallāh[324] told us, on the authority of Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kaṯīr,[325] and he on the authority of Abū Ja'far,[326] that he heard Abū Ja'far say that he had heard Abū Hurayrah[327] say, The Apostle of God said, "When a third of the night remains, God descends and says, 'Who is there that prays to Me? and I will answer him. Who is there that asks to be shielded from harm? and I will shield him from it. Who is there that asks Me to supply his needs? and I will supply them for him,'—until the dawn breaks."

The following tradition is related on the authority of 'Abdallāh ibn Bakr as-Sahmī: Hišām ibn Abī 'Abdallāh told us, on the authority of Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kaṯīr, and he on the authority of Hilāl ibn Abī Maymūnah, who said, 'Aṭā' ibn Yasār[328] told us that Rifā'ah al-Juhanī had told him, We were making the journey home to Mecca with God's Apostle, and, when we arrived at al-Kudayd, (or else he said, al-Qudayd),[328a] he praised God and extolled Him. Then he said, "When a third of the night has passed"—or else he said, "two-thirds of the night"—"God descends to the heaven and says, 'Who is there that prays to Me, that I may answer him? Who is there that asks forgiveness of Me, that I may forgive him? Who is there that has a request to make of Me, that I may grant it him?'—until the dawn breaks."

Another proof. God has said, "they fear their Lord who is above

[318] See above, 48, 53.

[319] Died ca. 825.

[320] Died 784.

[321] Died 743

[322] Died 717.

[323] No doubt as Sahmī, mentioned below.

[324] Died ca. 769.

[325] Died 746.

[326] Died ca. 749.

[327] Died 676.

[328] A Qur'ān reader in al-Madīnah. A member of the second generation of scholars after 'Alī.

[328a] Al-Kadayd (al-Kadīd) and al-Qudayd were situated on the road from Mecca to al-Madīnah. They were sixteen miles apart.

them;"[329] and, "the angels and the Spirit ascend to Him;"[330] and, "then He applied Himself to the heaven, which then was but smoke;"[331] and, "then mounted His Throne. . . . Ask now of the wise concerning Him;"[332] and, "then ascended His Throne. Save Him ye have no patron, and no intercessor."[333] Therefore, all that proves that God is in heaven, seated upon His Throne. Now, by unanimous consent, heaven is not the earth; and therefore this is a proof that God is unique in His oneness, seated upon His Throne.

Another proof. God has said, "and thy Lord shall come and the angels rank on rank;"[334] and, "What can such expect but that God should come down to them overshadowed with clouds?;"[335] and, "then came He nearer and approached, and was at the distance of two bows, or even closer, and He revealed to His servant what He revealed. His heart falsified not what he saw. What! will ye then dispute with him as to what he saw?,"[336] to His words "for he saw the greatest of the signs of his Lord."[337] God also said to 'Īsā ibn Maryam, "verily, I will cause thee to die, and will take thee up to Myself;"[338] and He has said, "they did not really slay him, but God took him up to Himself;"[339] and the Community agree unanimously that God raised 'Īsā to heaven. Also one of the common prayers of the people of Islām, when they supplicate God concerning the thing that descends upon them, is their saying together, [p. 36] "O Dweller upon the Throne!;" and one of their common oaths is "Nay, by Him who is veiled by seven heavens!"

Another proof. God has said, "It is not for mortal man that God should speak with him but by vision, or from behind a veil; or, He sendeth a messenger to reveal, by His permission, what He wishes;"[340] and the verse speaks of man particularly, and not of other, non-human creatures. If the verse were equally applicable to man and to other creatures, it would be far removed from ambiguity, and from furnishing an occasion to him who hears it to doubt that He says, "It is not for *any creature* that God should speak with him but by vision, or from behind a veil; or, He sendeth a messenger . . . ;" but doubt and perplexity are removed by His saying, "It is not for *a certain kind of creature* that God should speak with him but by vision, or from behind a veil; or, He sendeth a messenger . . . ," and we leave out of consideration species He does not include, by a general designation, in the verse; wherefore what we have said is a proof that He means man particularly, to the exclusion of other creatures.

[329] Qur'ān 16. 52.
[330] Ibid. 70.4.
[331] Ibid. 41. 10.
[332] Ibid. 25. 60.
[333] Ibid. 32. 3.
[334] Ibid. 89. 23.
[335] Ibid. 2. 206.
[336] Ibid. 53. 8-12.
[337] Ibid. 53. 18.
[338] Ibid. 3. 48.
[339] Ibid. 4. 156.
[340] Ibid. 42. 50, 51.

Another proof. God has said, "then are they returned to God, their Lord, the True;"[341] and, "But if thou couldest see when they shall be set before their Lord!;"[342] and, "Couldst thou but see when the guilty shall droop their heads before their Lord!;"[343] and, "And they shall be set before thy Lord in ranks."[344] All that proves that He is not in His creation, and His creation not in Him, and that He is seated upon His Throne. May He be far above the belief of the malefactors! Therefore they have not established any reality in their predication, nor have those who attempt to prove oneness by discussing their predication, done so; since all their reasoning amounts to *ta'ṭīl*, and all their predications prove rejection. Do you mean by that the assertion of *tanzīh*, and the rejection of *tašbīh?* Then we take refuge in God from a *tanzīh* that necessitates denial or *ta'ṭīl*.[345]

Another proof. God has said, "God is the light of the heavens and of the earth;"[346] and therefore He called Himself light. Now "light," according to the Community, must have one of two meanings: it is either light that is heard,[347] or light that is seen. But he who thinks that God is heard, and not seen, errs in his rejection of the visibility of his Lord, and his false denial of His Book and the words of His Prophet; for the *'ulamā'* relate, on the authority of 'Abdallāh ibn 'Abbās, that he said, "Reflect upon the creation of God, but reflect not upon God Himself; there are between His throne and heaven a thousand cubits, and God is above them."

Another proof. The *'ulamā'* relate, on the authority of the Prophet, that he said, "Man's feet shall not leave the presence of God until He questions him regarding his works." The *'ulamā'* relate that a man brought to the Prophet a black slave woman, and said, "O Apostle of God! I desire to free her by way of atonement. Is her liberation lawful?" Then the Prophet said to her, [p. 37] "Where is God?" She said, "In heaven." He said, "Who am I?" She said, "The Apostle of God." The Prophet said, "Free her, for she is a believer." This proves that God is upon His throne above heaven.

[341] Ibid. 6. 62.
[342] Ibid. 6. 30.
[343] Ibid. 32. 12.
[344] Ibid. 18. 46.
[345] *Tanzīh* is an attempt to obtain a conception of God's "otherness" by negation, that is, by declaring that He is not what human beings are. This, to al-Aš'arī's mind, leads to *ta'ṭīl*, depriving God of His predicates. See Introduction, 36.
[346] Qur'ān 24. 35.
[347] That is, light to the intelligence.

Chapter Containing the *Kalām* Concerning God's Face, His Eyes, His Sight, and His Hands.

God has said, "Everything shall perish except His face;"[348] and He has said, "but the face of thy Lord shall abide resplendent with majesty and glory"[349] (thus He tells us that He has a face that does not disappear, that dissolution does not overtake); and He has also said, "Under Our eyes it floated on;"[350] and He has said, "But build the ark under Our eye and after Our revelation"[351] (thus He tells us that He has a face and an eye, unqualified and undefined); and He has also said, "Wait thou patiently the judgment of thy Lord, for thou art in Our eye;"[352] and He has said, "that thou mightest be reared in Mine eye;"[353] and He has said, "And God heareth, beholdeth;"[354] and He said to Moses and Aaron, "for I am with you both. I will hearken and I will behold;"[355] and therefore He speaks of His hearing and His sight and His visibility. The Jahmiyyah deny that God has a face, as He has said; and they regard as false the doctrine that He has hearing and sight and an eye. They agree with the Christians; for the Christians do not believe that God is "hearing, beholding," except in the sense that He is knowing. The Jahmiyyah hold the same belief; and therefore what they really say is, "We say that God is knowing, but we do not say, 'hearing, beholding' in any other sense than 'knowing'" (the belief of the Christians is the same). The Jahmiyyah say that God has neither knowledge, nor power, nor hearing, nor sight. The end they have in view is simply a *taʿṭīl* of the unity and a false denial of the names of God. Therefore, they talk about it, but do not carry their beliefs to a logical conclusion. However, if they did not fear the sword, they would certainly say plainly that God is non-hearing and non-seeing and non-knowing; nevertheless, the fear of the sword restrains them from making an open profession of their *zandaqah*. A sheikh[356] much esteemed among them thinks that God's knowledge is God, and that God is knowledge. However, he denies the divine knowledge when he supposes he has asserted its existence, and therefore he is compelled to say, "O Knowledge, forgive me!" (since the knowledge of God, according to him, is God Himself, and God, according to his analogy (*qiyās*), is knowledge and power). May God be very far above that! Abu 'l-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Ašʿarī said, "To God we look for guidance and on Him do we

[348] Qur'ān 28.88.
[349] Ibid. 55.27.
[350] Ibid. 54.14.
[351] Ibid. 11.39.
[352] Ibid. 52.48.
[353] Ibid. 20.40.
[354] Ibid. 4.133.
[355] Ibid. 20.48.
[356] Abu 'l-Hudayl, who said, "God is a knower by a knowledge that is Himself" (*Maqālāt* 165).

rely; for there is no might or power except in God, and He is the God from whom help is sought. Whosoever questions us and says, 'Do you believe God has a face?,' the answer is: We believe it contrarily to the belief of the innovators; and His words 'But the face of thy Lord shall abide resplendent with majesty and glory'[357] are a proof of it."

Question. If we are asked, "Do you believe God has two hands?," the answer is: We believe it, and His words "the hand of God was over their hands,"[358] and His words "before him whom I have created with My two hands"[359] are a proof of it; and also, it is related, on the authority of the Prophet, that he said, "God rubbed Adam's back with His hand and produced from it [p. 38] his offspring,"[360] and therefore the existence of the hand is proved, and the truth of His words "before him whom I have created with My two hands;" and we are told in the *ḥabar* related on the authority of the Prophet, that God created Adam with His hand, and created the Garden of Eden with His hand, and wrote the Law (*tawrāh*) with His hand, and planted the Tree of Happiness with His hand. God has also said, "Nay! outstretched are both His hands,"[361] and we are told, on the authority of the Prophet, that he said, "Both His hands are right hands." He also said, "We had surely seized him by the right hand,"[362] and in the Arabic language, and in the usage of conversation, one may not say, "I have done thus-and-so with my two hands," meaning by it "grace." Since God addresses the Arabs only in their language, and what He reveals is understood in their speech and comprehended in their converse, and in the language of careful speakers one may not say, "I have done something with my two hands," meaning "grace," it is untrue that the meaning of His words "with My two hands" is "grace"—and that because one may not say, "I have a hand upon him," meaning "I have a grace upon him." He who would forbid us the use of the classical language and has not recourse to the lexicographers who reject the idea that "the hand" has the meaning of "the grace" may not persist in the idea that "the hand" is "the grace," except in accordance with classical usage; but, since he rejects classical usage, he must not interpret the Qur'ān in accordance with it, or assert that "the hand" is "grace" by its rules, because, if he has recourse, in the interpretation of God's words "with My two hands" as "My two graces,"[363] to *ijmāʿ*, the Muslims do not

[357] Qur'ān 55.27.
[358] Ibid. 48.10.
[359] Ibid. 38.75.
[360] See Wensinck, Handbook 11.
[361] Qur'ān 5.69.
[362] Ibid. 69.45.
[363] Here and in the next Question the form of this word in the unvocalized text is ambiguous: it may mean "My grace" or "My [two] graces." However,

agree upon that which he maintains; and if he has recourse to classical usage, classical usage does not allow anyone to say, "with my two hands," meaning "my two graces;" and if he seeks safety in a third direction, we will question him about it, and he will surely not find a way to justify himself.

Question. It may be said to the innovators, "Why do you think that the meaning of His words 'with My two hands' is 'My two graces'? Do you think it by *ijmā'*, or by classical usage?" They will not find it in the *ijmā'* or in the classical language, and if they say, "We believe it by *qiyās*," the answer is: Where do you find in the *qiyās* that God's words "with My two hands" have no meaning but "My two graces"? Whence is it possible to know by reason that it is interpreted thus-and-so? although we have seen that God has said in His Book, which speaks by the tongue of His Prophet, the Truthful, "We have not sent any apostle, save with the speech of his own people;" [364] and He has said, "But the tongue of him at whom they hint is foreign, while this Qur'ān is in the plain Arabic;" [365] and He has said, "We have made it an Arabic Qur'ān;" [366] and He has said, "Will they not then meditate on the Qur'ān?" [367] If the Qur'ān were in a language other than Arabic, surely it would not be possible for us to meditate upon it or to understand its meaning when we hear it; wherefore, since one who is not expert in the Arabic language is not expert in the Qur'ān, and only the Arabs understand it when they hear it, it is obvious that only the latter know it, because it was revealed in their language; and their language does not allow what the innovators claim.

[p. 39] *Question.* An argument has been advanced on the basis of God's words "And the heaven—with our hands We have built it up." [368] They say, "The hands (*aydin*) are the prowess, and the meaning of His words 'with My two hands' is 'by My two powers.'" [369] The answer is: This interpretation does not hold true for a number of reasons, the final and most decisive one being that *aydin* is not the plural of *yad*, because the plural of the *yad* that is "grace" is *ayādin*, and He says only, "before him whom I have created with My two hands;" [370] wherefore according to this the meaning of His words "with My two

the Question beginning on page 91 seems conclusive, since there the use of the dual is clear. The phrase "with My [two] hands" might be translated "with My hand" in an unvocalized text, but here, since the words are quoted from the Qur'ān, the dual is to be read.

[364] Qur'ān 14. 4.
[365] Ibid. 16. 105.
[366] Ibid. 43. 2.
[367] Ibid. 47. 26.
[368] Ibid. 51. 47.
[369] See note 363.
[370] Qur'ān 38. 75.

hands" cannot possibly be the same as that of His words "with Our hands We have built it up." Besides, if He meant "prowess," the meaning of that would be "by My two powers;" and this contradicts the statement of our opponents and shatters their opinions, because they cannot prove one power, and so how can they prove two? Besides, if God meant "power" by His words "before him whom I have created with My two hands," Adam would have no quarrel with Iblīs regarding that matter. But God intended that he should see the superiority of Adam, since He had created him, and not Iblīs, with His hand; whereas if He had created Iblīs with His two hands, as he had created Adam with His two hands, He would have had no reason for preferring Adam to Iblīs in that respect, and Iblīs would have said, arguing against his Lord, "Thou hast created me by Thy two hands as Thou has created Adam by them." Therefore, since God willed to prefer Adam to Iblīs in this respect, He said to Iblīs, rebuking him for his pride against Adam in refusing to worship him, "what hindereth thee from prostrating thyself before him whom I have created with My two hands? Is it that thou art puffed up with pride?," [371] which thing is a proof that the meaning of the verse is not "power" since God created all things by His power; but it signifies only the assertion of the existence of two hands, and Iblīs did not share with Adam the dignity of being created by them. It must be that the meaning of God's words "before him whom I have created with My two hands" is an assertion of the existence of two hands that are two graces; or that their meaning is an assertion of the existence of two hands that are two members; or that their meaning is an assertion of the existence of two hands that are two powers; or that their meaning is an assertion of the existence of two hands that are not two graces and not two members and not two powers, not qualified except as God is qualified. Therefore its meaning cannot be "two graces," because, according to the lexicographers, one may not say, "I have done something with my two hands," when he means "my two graces;" nor according to us nor according to our opponents, may we mean "two members;" nor, according to our opponents, may we mean "two powers;" and if three alternatives fail to hold true, the fourth is sound, namely, that the meaning of His words "with My two hands" is an assertion of the existence of two hands that are not two members and not two powers and not two graces, not qualified except insofar as it is said that they are two hands not like ordinary hands, and that they are not included in the three foregoing categories.

Question. Besides, if the meaning of God's words "with My two

[371] Ibid. 38. 75, 76.

hands" were "My two graces,"[372] Adam would have no superiority over Iblīs in that respect, according to our opponents' opinions, because God created Iblīs, according to their belief, as He created Adam, by that means, and it must be that by the two graces [p. 40] He meant either the body of Adam or that two accidents are created in the body of Adam. Therefore, if He meant the body of Adam, then bodies, according to our Mu'tazilite opponents, are one genus; and since bodies, according to them, are one genus, then, according to their opinions, the same grace occurs in the flesh of Iblīs as occurs in the flesh of Adam. Likewise, if He means two accidents, then there is no accident He has made in the body of Adam—color, life, prowess, nor anything besides—that He has not made, of the same genus, according to them, in the body of Iblīs; and from this it follows that Adam has no superiority over Iblīs in that respect. God is Almighty, and He uses that as an argument against Iblīs only in order to show him that Adam is superior in that respect; wherefore what we have said is a proof that God, since He said, "before him whom I have created with My two hands," did not mean "My two graces."

Answer. It may also be said to them: Why do you deny that God means, by His words "My two hands," two hands that are not two graces? Therefore, if they say, "Because, if the hand is not grace, it is nothing but a member," the answer is: Why do you conclude that the hand, if it is not grace, is nothing but a member? If, then, they refer us to our proof text and to our own experience of the created world, and say, "The hand, if it is not grace in the proof text, is nothing but a member," the answer is: If you make use of the proof text and draw conclusions concerning God from it, then neither do we find a living creature that is not a body consisting of flesh and blood; and therefore, draw conclusions about God from that, and if you do not, you go back upon your belief and contradict your argument. But if you assert the existence of a living thing not like the living things we know, then why do you deny that the two hands of which God spoke are two hands that are not two graces and not two members and not like a number of hands? Likewise, it may be said to them: You do not find a wise ruler who is not human, but assert that the world has a wise Ruler who is not like man, and you dissent from the proof text and contradict your argument. Therefore do not refuse to assert the existence of two hands that are not two graces and not two members, because that is contrary to the proof text.

[372] See note 363.

Question. If they say, "Since you assert that God has two hands, because of His words 'before him whom I have created with My two hands,' why do you not assert that He has a number of hands, because of His words 'from what Our hands have made,'"[373] the answer is: It is unanimously agreed that the belief of those who assert God has a number of hands is false; and therefore, since it is unanimously agreed that the belief of those who entertain that idea is false, God must indeed have spoken of a number of hands, but really have meant to assert the existence of two hands, because the *ijmā'* has demonstrated the soundness of the proof, and if the *ijmā'* is sound, He must really have meant by His word "hands" "two hands," because the Qur'ān is to be interpreted literally, and we do not depart from its literal meaning, except by proof; and so we find a proof by which we transfer the reference to hands from its primary literal meaning to another literal meaning; and the latter literal meaning must rest on a truth from which there is no departure except by proof.

[p. 41] *Question.* If anybody says, "Since God speaks of 'hands' and means 'two hands,' why do you deny that He speaks of 'hands' and means 'one hand'?," the answer is: God speaks of "hand" and means "two hands," because it is unanimously agreed that the belief of those who say "many hands," and the belief of those who say "one hand" are false. But we say "two hands," because the Qur'ān is to be interpreted literally, unless there is a proof that it is to be interpreted otherwise than literally.

Question. If anybody says, "You do not deny that God's words 'from what Our hands have made' and His words 'before him whom I have created with My two hands' are metaphorical," the answer is: The rule of the Word of God is that it is to be interpreted literally and truly, and a thing is not transferred from its literal meaning to a metaphorical one, except by proof. Do you not agree that if the literal meaning of the Word is the universal one, then, if the universal meaning occurs in an expression, and what is intended by it is the particular meaning, it is not really to be interpreted literally; nevertheless, that of which the literal sense is universal may not be withdrawn from its universal meaning without proof? Likewise God's words "before him whom I have created with My two hands" are to be interpreted literally and truly, as being a proof of the existence of the two hands, and they may not be transferred from the literal sense of "two hands" to that which our opponents maintain, except by proof; for if that were permitted, one

[373] Qur'ān 36.71.

might maintain, without proof, that what has a universal sense in its literal interpretation is particular, and what has a particular sense in its literal interpretation is universal; and since one may not make this contention without evidence, you may not maintain that it is a metaphor, unless there is proof; but, on the contrary, God's words "before him whom I have created with My two hands" must be a proof of God's possession of two hands in reality, and not two graces, since, when two graces are in question, according to the lexicographers, nobody who follows their principles may say, "I have done something with my two hands," meaning "the two graces."

Chapter Containing the Reply to the Jahmiyyah Concerning their Denial of God's Knowledge and His Power and His Attributes in General.

God has said, "in His knowledge He sent it down;"[374] and He has said, "and no female conceiveth or bringeth forth without His knowledge."[375] He has also mentioned His knowledge in five other places in His Book. He has said, "But if they answer you not, then know that it hath been sent down to you in the wisdom of God only."[376] He has said, "yet nought of His knowledge shall they grasp, save what He willeth."[377] He has also mentioned His prowess and said, "Saw they not that God who created them was mightier than they in prowess?;"[378] and He has said, "Possessed of might, the Unshaken."[379] He has said, "And the heaven—with our hands We have built it up."[380] Now the Jahmiyyah think that God has neither knowledge, nor power, nor life, nor hearing, nor sight, and they mean to deny that God is a knower, a wielder of power, a living one, a hearing one, a seeing one; and therefore, while the fear of the sword restrains them from denying it publicly, nevertheless the denial is there, because, since they say, "God has neither knowledge nor power," they believe that He is neither a knower nor a wielder of power; and that is necessarily true according to them. They have simply borrowed this [p. 42] from the *zindiqs* and the advocates of *ta'ṭil*; because many of the *zindīqs* believe that God is not a knower, or a wielder of power, or a living one, or a hearing one, or a seeing one. Therefore, the Mu'tazilah have not the power to state it openly (although they really mean it), but say that God is a knower, a wielder of power, a living one, a hearing one, a seeing one, by appellation (*tasmiah*), without asserting that He has real knowledge, power, hearing, or sight.

[374] Ibid. 4. 164.
[375] Ibid. 35. 12.
[376] Ibid. 11. 17.
[377] Ibid. 2. 256.
[378] Ibid. 41.14.
[379] Ibid. 51. 58.
[380] Ibid. 51. 47.

Question. One of their chief persons, Abu 'l-Huḏayl al-'Allāf, has said that God's knowledge is God, and so he makes God knowledge. It must be said to him, "Since you say that God's knowledge is God, say, 'O knowledge of God, forgive me and have mercy on me!'," and then he will decline to do this and will be involved in contradictions. Know that they who say, "a knower but not knowledge" contradict themselves, just as they who say, "knowledge but not a knower" contradict themselves; and so it is with the beliefs regarding power and the wielder of power, life and the living one, hearing and sight and the hearing one and the seeing one.

Answer. It may be said to them: Tell us about those who think that God is a discourser, a speaker, eternally a commander, a forbidder, without words or a discourse or a command or a prohibition—are they not self-contradictory and deserters from the company of the Muslims? They will undoubtedly answer yes. Hence, it may be said to them: And so likewise, he who says that God is a knower, but has not knowledge, contradicts himself and is a deserter from the company of the Muslims. The Muslims unanimously agreed, before the origin of the Jahmiyyah and the Mu'tazilah and the Ḥarūriyyah, that God had knowledge eternally, and said, "God's knowledge is eternal, for God's knowledge precedes created things," and they do not refuse to say of every new thing that arises and everything that comes down from God, "All this exists antecedently in God's knowledge;" and therefore he who denies that God has knowledge dissents from the Muslims and is guilty of a departure from their agreement.

Answer. It may be said to them: Since God is a willer, has He a will? Then if they say no, the answer is: And so, since you assert the existence of a willer who has not a will, assert the existence of a speaker who has not speech. But if they assert the existence of God's will, the answer is: And so, since He is a willer, He cannot be a willer except by a will; and therefore you do not deny that the knower knows only by knowledge, and that God has knowledge, as you have asserted He has a will.

Question. They also make a distinction between God's knowledge and His Word; wherefore they say that God knew Moses and Pharaoh, but spoke to Moses and not to Pharaoh. Hence it may likewise be said: He taught Moses the art of governing and skill in public speaking, and gave him prophecy, but did not teach those things to Pharaoh; wherefore, if God has a Word, because He spoke to Moses, but did not speak to Pharaoh, then likewise God has knowledge, because He taught Moses, but did not teach Pharaoh. Moreover it may be said [p. 43] to them:

Since God must have had a Word with which He spoke to Moses and not to Pharaoh, when He spoke to Moses and not to him, then you cannot deny, since He taught them together, that He has knowledge with which He taught them together. Furthermore, it may be said: God has spoken to created things, because He said to them, "Be!," and you have asserted that God[381] has speech; and so, likewise, if He knows all created things, He has knowledge.

Answer. Furthermore, it may be said to them: Since you think God must have a Word, but He has not knowledge, because His Word is more particular than His knowledge and His knowledge more universal than it, then say that God has power, because His knowledge, according to you, is more universal than His power (for it is one of the tenets of the Qadariyyah that God has not power to create infidelity; wherefore they assert that God's power is more particular than His knowledge; and so it behooves them to say, in view of their argument, that God has power).

Answer. Furthermore, it may be said to them: Is not God a knower, and is not the attribution to Him of His being a knower more universal than the attribution to Him of His being a discourser, a speaker? But then, too, it is not necessarily true, because the Word is more particular, that God is a discourser and not a knower. Hence, why do you not believe that, even if God's Word is more particular than His knowledge, that is not a denial that God has knowledge, just as it is not a denial, on the basis of the Word's particularity, that God is a knower?

Answer. It may be said to them: What is the source of your knowledge that God is a knower? Therefore, if they say, "His words 'He knoweth everything,'"[382] the answer is: For the same reason, then, say that God has knowledge, because of His words "in His knowledge He sent it down,"[383] and His words "and no female conceiveth or bringeth forth without His knowledge,"[384] and likewise His statement that He has prowess, by His words "Saw they not that God who created them was mightier than they in prowess?"[385] If they say, "We say that God is a knower, because He made the world according to the signs of wisdom and established law it contains," the answer is: Then why do you not say that God has knowledge, on the basis of that wisdom of His and the signs of His law that appear in the world? for judicious deeds appear only on the part of a possessor of knowledge, just as they appear only on the part of a knower; and likewise they appear only on the part

[381] The text reads "God" instead of "to God." This is clearly a misprint. The correct construction occurs in the last line on page 52 of the Arabic text.

[382] Qur'ān 42. 10. [383] Ibid. 4. 164. [384] Ibid. 35. 12. [385] Ibid. 41.14.

of a possessor of prowess, just as they appear only on the part of a wielder of power.

Answer. It may be said to them: Since you deny God's knowledge, do you not deny His names? Therefore, if they say, "How can we deny His names, when He mentions them in His Book?," the answer is: Then do not deny His knowledge and His prowess, because He mentions them in His book.

Another answer. It may be said to them: God has taught His Prophet the religious laws and the ordinances, and the permitted and the forbidden; but He cannot teach him what He does not know; and so likewise [p. 44] God cannot teach His Prophet that of which God does not possess knowledge. May God be very far above the beliefs of the Jahmiyyah!

Answer. It may be said to them: When God curses the infidels, is not His cursing a form of activity directed towards them, and is not the cursing of the Prophet a form of activity directed towards them? Therefore,[386] if they say yes,[386] the answer is: Then you cannot deny that, since God teaches His Prophet a thing, the Prophet has knowledge and therefore God has knowledge. When we assert that He is wrathful towards the infidels, the existence of wrath is undoubtedly asserted; and likewise, since we assert that He is satisfied with the faithful, the existence of satisfaction is undoubtedly asserted; and likewise, since we assert that He is living, hearing, seeing, the existence of life, hearing, and sight is undoubtedly asserted.

Answer. It may be said to them: We find the name "knower" derived from "knowledge," and the name "wielder of power" derived from "power," and likewise the name "living one" derived from "life," and the name "hearing one" derived from "hearing," and the name "seeing one" derived from "sight." The purpose of the derivation of the names of God must be either to indicate His nature or to give Him a proper name. Now God cannot be called, when He is given a proper name, by a name that does not indicate His nature and is not derived from a predicate. Therefore, when we say that God is a knower, a wielder of power, that is not giving Him proper names, as when we say, "Zayd" and "'Amr" (on this the Muslims agree unanimously), and since it is not giving Him proper names, and the name is derived from "knowledge," the assertion of the existence of knowledge necessarily follows. And if it is for the purpose of indicating His nature, then He

[386] See note 191.

is not different for the indication of whose nature it is used; and, since the meaning of "knower" when we use the term is that the knower has knowledge, every knower must be a possessor of knowledge, just as, since my words "actually existent" are, to our minds, a clear assertion of existence, the Creator necessarily exists by this assertion of His existence, because He is actually existent.

Answer. It may be said to the Mu'tazilah and the Jahmiyyah and the Ḥarūriyyah: Do you say, "God has antecedent knowledge of created things, and of the delivery of every pregnant woman and the pregnancy of every woman, and of the revelation of all He reveals?" Therefore, if they say yes, they assert the existence of God's knowledge and agree. But if they say no, the answer is: This is a denial on your part of God's words "in His knowledge He sent it down,"[387] and His words "and no female conceiveth or bringeth forth without His knowledge,"[388] and His words "But if they answer you not, then know that it hath been sent down to you in the wisdom of God only;"[389] and, since God's words "knowing everything"[390] and "not a leaf falls but He knoweth it"[391] make it necessarily true that He is "knowing" and knows created things, likewise you do not deny that these verses make it necessarily true that God has knowledge of created things.

Answer. It may be said to them: God has knowledge of the distinction between His friends and His enemies; and does He will it? and has He a will for faith, since He wills faith? Therefore if they say yes, [p. 45] they agree; and if they say, "Since He wills faith, He has a will," the answer is: And, likewise, since He distinguishes between His friends and His enemies, He certainly has knowledge of this distinction; for how could creatures have knowledge of it and the Creator not have knowledge of it? for creatures would then outrival the Creator in knowledge and be superior to Him. May God be very far above that! It may also be said to them: Since the creature who has knowledge is more worthy of exalted dignity than he who has not knowledge, then since you think that God has not knowledge, you must admit that the creatures are higher in rank than the Creator. May God be very far above that!

Answer. It may also be said to them: If ignorance and loss overtake the creature who has not knowledge, you do not deny that the existence of God's knowledge is undoubtedly asserted; and if not, you cause loss to overtake Him (may He be more glorified, and stronger, and more

[387] Qur'ān 4. 164.
[388] Ibid. 35. 12.
[389] Ibid. 11. 17.
[390] Ibid. 42. 10 and passim.
[391] Ibid. 6. 59.

eminent than you believe!). Do you not agree that ignorance and loss overtake the creature who does not know? And does not he who believes that of God qualify Him with what is not appropriate to Him? Therefore, likewise, if ignorance and loss overtake the creature of whom it is said, "He has not knowledge," that denial must not be made in God's case, because neither ignorance nor loss overtakes Him.

Answer. It may also be said to them: Is it possible for acts of government on the part of one who is not a knower to possess an orderly arrangement? Therefore if they say, "This is impossible and acts that proceed according to law and order are possible only on the part of a knower, a wielder of power, a living one," the answer is: And likewise acts that proceed according to law and order are possible only on the part of a possessor of knowledge and power and life; and so if their appearance apart from a possessor of knowledge is possible, why do you deny the possibility of their appearance apart from a knower, a wielder of power, a living one? Every question we put to them concerning knowledge includes, on their premisses, power and life and hearing and sight.

Question. The Mu'tazilah think that the meaning of God's words "hearing, seeing" is "knowing." The answer is: Then since God says, "verily with you both I hearken and behold,"[392] and, "God hath heard the words of her who pleaded with thee against her husband,"[393] do these words mean "knowledge" according to you? Therefore, if they say yes, the answer is: Then you must say, "The meaning of His words 'I hearken and behold' is 'I know and I know,'" since those words mean God's knowledge.

Question. The Mu'tazilah deny the attributes of the Lord of the Worlds, and think that the meaning of "hearing, seeing," is identical with the meaning of "knowing," just as the Christians think that God's hearing is His sight and His visibility and His Word and His knowledge and His Son. May God be very far above that! It may be said to the Mu'tazilah: Since you think that "hearing, seeing" mean "knower," do you not agree that "wielder of power" [p. 46] means "knower"? Therefore, since you think that the meaning of "hearing, seeing" is "wielder of power," do you not think that the meaning of "wielder of power" is "knower"? And therefore, since you think that "living one" means "wielder of power," why do you not think that "wielder of power" means "knower"? Wherefore, if they say, "In that case every-

[392] Ibid. 20. 48.
[393] Ibid. 58. 1.

thing known must be an object of power," the answer is: If "hearing, seeing" meant "knower," every known thing would certainly be heard; but since that is impossible, your belief is false.

Chapter Containing the *Kalām* Concerning God's Will.

The reply to the Muʿtazilah regarding this: It may be said to them: Do you not think that God is eternally a knower? If they say yes, the answer is: Then why do you not believe that what He eternally knows will be at a given time, He eternally wills to be at that time; and what He eternally knows will not be, He eternally wills not to be; and that He eternally wills that what He knows shall be as He knows it? Then, if they say, "We do not believe that God is eternally a willer, because God is a willer by a created will," the answer is: Why do you think that God is a willer by a created will? What is the difference between you and the Jahmiyyah, who falsely believe God is a knower by created (*maḫlūq*) knowledge? But, since God's knowledge cannot be created, you cannot deny that His will is not created. Wherefore, if they say, "God's knowledge cannot be originated,[394] because then there would have to be an origin in another knowledge, and so on *ad infinitum*," the answer is: You cannot deny that God's will is not originated or created, because then it must have had its origin in another will, and so on *ad infinitum*. And if they say, "God's knowledge cannot be originated, because then He must be a willer by a will [395] that one not Himself has originated in Him; and that is impossible," [396] and if they say, "God's knowledge cannot be originated, because loss overtakes him who was not a knower and then knew," the answer is: And God's will cannot be originated or created, because loss overtakes him who is not a willer until he wills; and, just as His will cannot be originated or created, so His Word cannot be originated or created.

Another answer. It may also be said to them: If you think that infidelity and rebellion are in the power of God; nevertheless, He does not will them, but wills that all creatures should believe, yet they do not believe; then it is necessarily true, according to your belief, that most of what God wishes to be, is not, and most of what God wishes not to be, is; because the infidelity that exists, God not wishing it, according to you, exceeds the faith that exists, in conformity with His wish, and most of what He wishes to be is not; and this is a denial of that upon which the

[394] *muḥdaṯ* "made from what is already in existence." The word *maḫlūq* means "created out of nothing."

[395] *E* has *irūrah*—misprint.

[396] See note on *H* ad loc. (60).

Muslims have agreed unanimously, namely, that what God wishes to be, is, and what He does not wish, is not.

[p. 47] *Another answer.* It may also be said to them: [397] It may be gathered [397] from your words that most of what Iblīs wishes to be, is (because infidelity is greater than faith), and most of what is, he wishes; and therefore you make the wish of Iblīs more effective than the wish of the Lord of the Worlds, because most of what he wishes, is, and most of what is, he wishes. It follows necessarily from this that you assign to Iblīs a rank, with respect to wishing, that does not belong to the Lord of the Worlds. May God be very far above the belief of the wrongdoers!

Another answer. It may be said to them: Which is the worthier of the attribute of effective power: he of whom it is true that, when he wishes a thing to be, it most certainly is, and when he does not wish it, it is not; or he who wills it to be and it is not, and what he does not will, is? Wherefore, if they say, "He of whom it is true that most of what he wills is not, is the worthier of the attribute of effective power," they treat the matter with scorn, and it may be said to them: If you may say what you do, anyone may say, "He of whom it is true that there is what he does not know, is worthier than he of whom it is true that there is nothing except what he knows." But if they abandon this scornful attitude, and think that he of whom it is true that, when he wills a thing, it is, and, when he does not will it, it is not, is the worthier of the attribute of effective power, they must admit, according to their opinions, that Iblīs is worthier of effective power than God, because most of what he wills, is, and most of what is, he has willed; and the answer is: If he of whom it is true that when he wills a thing, it is, and when he does not will it, it is not, is the worthier of the attribute of effective power, then you must admit that when God wills a thing, it is, and when He does not will it, it is not, because He is the worthier of the attribute of effective power.

Answer. It may also be said to them: Which is the worthier of divinity and authority: he of whom it is true that nothing exists except what he knows, and nothing is absent from his knowledge, and that is not possible with respect to him; or he of whom it is true that things exist that he does not know, and most things are remote from his knowledge? Wherefore, if they say, "He of whom it is true that nothing exists except what he knows, and nothing is remote from his knowledge, is the worthier of the attribute of divinity," the answer is: Then, likewise, he who does not will the existence of anything except what exists, and nothing exists except what he wills, and nothing is remote from his will,

[397] *H* omits and reads: "One of the things you believe is. . . ."

is the worthier of the attribute of divinity, just as you hold that belief regarding knowledge; and since they hold that belief, they abandon their belief, and give it up, and assert that God is a willer of every existent thing, and they make it necessarily true that He does not will that anything shall be, except what is.

Answer. It may also be said to them: If you say that there are under His authority things He does not will, there exist, in that case, under His authority things of which He disapproves. They will certainly answer yes. Then it may be said to them: And so if there are under His authority things of which He disapproves [p. 48] you cannot deny that there are under His authority things the existence of which He forbids. Wherefore, if they make a reply to this, the answer is: Then disobedience exists, whether God wishes or forbids it; and this is an attribute of weakness and poverty. May God be very far above that!

Answer. It may also be said to them: Are there not, among the things human beings do, that at which God is wrathful, and that for which when they do it God is angry with them; and therefore they anger Him and make Him wrathful? They will certainly answer yes. Wherefore, it may be said to them: Then, if human beings do what He does not will and that of which He disapproves, they certainly make Him disapprove; and this is an attribute of power. May God be very far above that!

Answer. It may also be said to them: Has not God said, "Doer of what He wills"?[398] They will certainly answer yes. Wherefore, it may be said to them: Then he who thinks that God does what He does not will, and that He wills results of His action that do not come to pass, must admit that this happens, and God is unmindful and negligent of it, or that He is subject to weakness and inadequacy to prevent what He does not will. They will certainly answer yes. Therefore, it may be said to them: Then likewise he who thinks that there is under God's authority what He does not will on the part of human beings, must admit one of two things: either that he thinks this is the result of carelessness or neglect, or that he thinks He is subject to weakness and inadequacy to prevent what He does not will.

Another answer. It may also be said to them: Does not he who thinks that God does what He does not know, accuse God of an ignorance that is not appropriate to Him? They will certainly answer yes. Therefore, it may be said to them: Then likewise he who thinks that human beings do what He does not wish, must admit that he accuses God of careless-

[398] Qur'ān 11. 109.

ness and inadequacy to effect what He wills. And so, if they say yes, the answer is: And likewise he who thinks that human beings do what God does not know must accuse God of ignorance. They will certainly answer yes. Therefore, it may be said to them: And so likewise, if from the existence of a deed that God has done, not willing it, it necessarily follows that there is neglect, or weakness and inadequacy to effect what He wills, then likewise if there is, on the part of one who is not He, what He does not will, the assertion of the existence of carelessness and neglect, or of weakness and inadequacy to effect what He wills, necessarily follows; for there is no difference in this respect between what is done by Him and what is done by one who is not He.

Another answer. It may also be said to them: If there is under the authority of God what He does not will, yet He knows it [p. 49] and is not subject to weakness and inadequacy to effect what He wills, you cannot deny that there is under His authority what He does not know, yet He is not subject to loss. Therefore, if this is impossible, what you believe is impossible.

Another question. If anybody says, "Why do you believe that God wills that everything that exists should exist, and that all that which does not exist should not exist?," the answer is: The proof of it is the fact that the argument makes it clear that God creates infidelity and disobedience, and we are going to explain this further on in our book; and, since God must be the creator of those things, He must be the willer of them, because He cannot create what He does not will.

Another answer. There cannot be, under the authority of God, any acquisition (*iktisāb*)[399] on the part of human beings that God does not will, just as there cannot be any universally recognized act of God's own that He does not will, because, if any act of His occurred without His knowing it, it would imply a lack in God, and the same thing would be true if any human act occurred without His knowing it. Therefore, in the same way, no human act can occur without His willing it, because that would imply that it occurred out of carelessness and neglect or out of weakness and inadequacy on His part to effect what He wills, just as that would necessarily be true if there occurred any universally recognized act of God's that He did not will. Besides, if disobedience existed without His wishing it to exist, He would disapprove of and forbid its existence, and it would necessarily be true that disobedience was in existence whether God wished or forbade it, and this is an attribute of weakness. May God be very far above that! We have made it clear that God eter-

[399] See Introduction, 36.

nally really wills what He really knows; and so, since infidelity is among the things that exist and He knows it, then He wills it to exist.

Answer. It may also be said to them: If God knows that infidelity will be and wills it not to be, what He knows is contrary to what He knows; but if that is impossible, He wills what He knows to be as He knows.

Answer. It may also be said to them: Why do you deny that God wills the infidelity that He knows will be, to be foul, corrupt, self-contradictory, contrary to faith? If they say, "Because the willer of folly is foolish," the answer is: Why do you believe it? Has not God told us, concerning the son of Adam, that he said to his brother, "Even if thou stretch forth thine hand against me to slay me, I will not stretch forth my hand against thee to slay thee. Truly I fear God, the Lord of the Worlds. Yea, rather would I that thou shouldst bear my sin and thine own sin, and that thou become an inmate of Hell"?[400] And so he willed not to kill his brother, that he might not be punished, but willed that his brother should kill him. so that he might bear the sin of his murder for him and the rest of [p. 50] his sins that were upon him, and so become an inmate of Hell; wherefore, he willed his brother's act of murder, which is folly, but was not foolish because of it. Then why do you think that, if God wills the folly of men, it necessarily follows that He Himself is to be charged with it?

Answer. It may also be said to them: Joseph said, "O my Lord! I prefer the prison to compliance with their bidding,"[401] and their imprisonment of him is disobedience; wherefore he willed disobedience, which is their imprisonment of him, and did not will to do their bidding, but was not foolish because of it. Then you cannot deny that the Creator is not necessarily foolish if He wills the folly of men, simply because it is abominable on their part and contrary to obedience.

Another question. It may also be said to them: Is not any of us who sees the crimes of the Muslims foolish? But God sees them and is not to be accused of folly—is it not certainly so? Then it may be said to them: Then you cannot deny that any of us who wills folly is foolish, but God wills the folly of the foolish, yet is not to be accused of being foolish. May God be above that!

Another question. It may also be said to them: Among us a foolish man is foolish only when he wills folly, because it is forbidden him and he is under the law (*šarī'ah*) of someone above him who defines and

[400] Qur'ān 5. 31, 32.

[401] Ibid. 12. 33.

prescribes his actions; and therefore, since he does what is forbidden him he is foolish. But the Lord of the Worlds is not under a *šarī'ah* and there is not above Him anyone who defines and prescribes His actions, and there is not above Him a revealer, or an inaccessible one, or a commander, or a rebuker; and therefore it does not necessarily follow that, since He wills it, He is a reprobate and is to be accused of folly.

Question. It may also be said to them: Is not any man foolish who leaves the issue free between his servants and his handmaids who commit fornication with one another, when he is not powerless to separate them? But the Lord of the Worlds leaves the issue free between His servants and handmaids who commit fornication one with another, although He has the power to separate them, yet He is not foolish. Likewise a man who wills folly is foolish, but the Lord of the Worlds wills folly, yet is not foolish.

Another question. It may also be said to them: A man who wills obedience to God is obedient, just as anyone who wills folly is foolish; but the Lord of the Worlds wills obedience, yet is not obedient, and hence, in like manner, He wills folly, yet is not foolish.

[p. 51] *Another question.* It may also be said to them: God said, "If God had wished, they would not have wrangled,"[402] and thus He says that if He had wished them not to wrangle, "they would not have wrangled," He says, "but God does what He wills"[403] in the way of fighting, and therefore, since fighting takes place, He wishes it, just as when He said, "but though they should return, they would surely go back to that which was forbidden them,"[404] and thus He makes it necessarily true that, if the return were to the world, they would surely go back to infidelity, and that since He does not cause them to return to the world, they do not go back; and therefore, in the same way, if He had wished that they should not wrangle, they would not have wrangled, but since they do wrangle, He wishes them to wrangle.

Another question. It may also be said to them: God said, "Had We wished, We had certainly given to every soul its guidance. But true shall be the word which hath gone forth from Me—I will surely fill Hell with *jinn* and men together;"[405] and since the word concerning that is true, He does not wish to give every soul its guidance (because He simply does not give it its guidance, since the word concerning the punishment of the infidels is true); and since He does not will it, He wishes them to err. Therefore, if they say, "The meaning of that is

[402] Ibid. 2. 254.

[403] L. c.

[404] Ibid. 6. 28.

[405] Ibid. 32. 13.

'If We had wished, We should certainly have forced them to be guided and compelled them to it,'" the answer is: Then, since He forces them to be guided and compels them to it, are they guided?[406] Wherefore, if they say yes, the answer is: Then if, since He makes guidance, they are guided, you cannot deny that if He makes the infidelity of the infidels, they are infidels. (This is fatal to their belief because they think that nobody except an infidel makes infidelity.) It may also be said to them: In what[407] way would their perseverance be guidance, if He gave it to them and wished it for them? Therefore, if they say, "By defence (*iljā'*)," the answer is: If He defends them and enables them to persevere, does what they do because of the defence avail them? If they say yes, the answer is: Then, since He tells us that if He had wished, He would have given them guidance (unless there is no truthfulness on His part in the statement that He will fill Jahannam), and since, if He defended them, it would not avail them and would not avert punishment from them (just as Pharaoh's words that he spoke at the drowning and the defence did not avail him), then there is no meaning in your words, because, unless there is no truth in the words "Certainly every soul would have been given its guidance,"[408] the giving of guidance, in the way you believe, does not avert punishment.

Another question. It may also be said to them: God said, "Should God bestow abundance upon His servants, they might act wantonly on the earth,"[409] and, "But for fear that all mankind would have become a single people (of unbelievers), verily We would certainly have given to those who believe not in the God of Mercy roofs of silver to their houses."[410] And so He tells us that, were it not that mankind would all be infidels,[411] He would bestow abundance upon the infidels and put roofs of silver on their houses; nevertheless[411] He does not bestow abundance upon them and does not give the infidels roofs of silver. Then you cannot deny that, if He did not will [p. 52] the infidels to disbelieve, He would not create them, although He knows that if He creates them they will be unbelievers, just as, if He willed that mankind should all be infidels,[412] He would certainly give the infidels roofs of silver and stairs to ascend by; nevertheless[412] He does not give the infidels roofs of silver and stairs to ascend by, in order that mankind may not all be infidels, since it is known to Him that, if He did not follow that course, they would certainly all be infidels.

[406] *H*: "they are guided."
[407] *H* misprints ان for اى.
[408] Qur'ān 32. 13.
[409] Ibid. 42. 26.
[410] Ibid. 43. 32.
[411] *H* omits. See note ad loc. (67).
[412] *H* omits.

Chapter Containing the *Kalām* Concerning the Predestination of the Works of Human Beings and the Capacity and the Justification and the Condemnation.[413]

It may be said to the Qadariyyah: Can God teach His servants a thing He does not know? Wherefore, if they say, "God does not teach His servants a thing unless He knows it," the answer is: Then likewise He does not give them power over a thing unless He has power over it. There is no doubt about the answer to that. Wherefore, it may be said to them: Then, if He gives them the power[414] to be infidels, He has the power to create infidelity for them; and if He has the power to create infidelity for them,[415] you do not prove that the doctrine of the creation of infidelity for them is[415] corrupt, self-contradictory, and false. God has said, "Doer of what He wills,"[416] and if infidelity is among the things He wills, He makes it and predetermines it and refuses the infidels the gift of grace. It may be said to them: Has not God the power to bestow upon His creatures such abundance that, if He gave it to them, they would surely act wantonly, and to do to them a thing of such character that, if He did it to the infidels, they would surely disbelieve, as He has said, "Should God bestow abundance upon His servants, they might act wantonly on the earth,"[417] and, "But for fear that all mankind would have become a single people (of unbelievers), verily We would certainly have given to those who believe not in the God of Mercy roofs of silver to their houses"[418]—the verses? They will certainly answer yes; wherefore it may be said to them: Then you cannot deny that He has the power to give them such grace that, if He gave it to them, they would certainly all believe, just as He has the power to do to them a thing of such character that, if He did it to them, they would all disbelieve.

Another question. It may also be said to them: Has not God said, "But for the goodness and mercy of God towards you, ye would have followed Satan, except a few,"[419] and, "but for the goodness of God towards you, and His mercy, no one of you would have been cleansed forever"?[420] He has also said, "And he shall look and see him in the midst of Hell,"[421] meaning "in the middle of Hell." He has also said, "By God, thou hadst almost caused me to perish, and, but for the

[413] Read "*tajwīr*" instead of "*tajwīz*."
[414] *H* misprints ر for ل .
[415] *H*: "Why do you assert that He creates their infidelity . . . ?"
[416] Qur'ān 11. 109.
[417] Ibid. 42.26.
[418] Ibid. 43. 32.
[419] Ibid. 4. 85.
[420] Ibid. 24. 21.
[421] Ibid. 37. 53.

favor [422] of my Lord,[422] I had surely been of those who have been brought (with thee into torment)." [423] What is the goodness He did to the faithful, of which it is true that, if He had not done it, they would surely have followed Satan, and, if He had not done it, none of them would have been cleansed forever? And what is the grace, of which it is true that, if He had not given it, he would surely have been of those who have been brought into torment? Is it a thing that He did not do to the infidels, but did exclusively to the faithful? Wherefore, if they say yes, they abandon their belief and assert that God gives grace [p. 53] and goodness to the faithful, to whom He gives all grace and goodness when He creates them, and does not vouchsafe similar things to the infidels; and if they say this, they speak the truth. But if they say, "God does it at the same time to the infidels: when He does it to the faithful, He does it to them," then, if God does it at the same time to the infidels, yet they are not cleansed but follow Satan and are brought into Hell, is it also possible for Him to say to the faithful, "Unless I had created for you hands and feet, you would surely have followed Satan," when He creates hands and feet for the infidels, yet they follow Satan? Wherefore, if they say, "It is impossible," the answer is: Likewise what you say is impossible; and this makes it clear that God gives exclusively to the faithful such favor and grace and direction as He does not give to the infidels, and prefers the faithful to them.

Question Concerning the Capacity.[424]

It may also be said to them: Is not the capacity to believe a gracious gift of God's and a favor and a kind act on His part? Wherefore, if they say yes, the answer is: Then you cannot deny that it is grace and direction. There is no doubt about the answer to that. It may also be said to them: Therefore, if the infidels have the power to believe, you cannot deny that they are given grace to believe. But if they were given grace and directed, they would surely be commendable; and since

[422] *E* omits. [423] Qur'ān 37. 54, 55.

[424] For the views of the Mu'tazilah on this question see *Maqālāt* 229 ff. "The Mu'tazilah agree that the capacity exists before the act, and that it is the power to do it or its opposite, and that it is not the cause of the act. They all deny that God makes obligatory for a human being what he has not the power to do" (ibid. 230). See also ibid. 42 ff., 72, 73. Their more recondite discussions of the capacity and related matters belong to the "obscure and refined of the *kalām*." Al-Aš'arī discharges competently enough his task of proving that the Mu'tazilite position is not the position of Islām, but he does not close with the real problem, that of God's seeming injustice in requiring of man what the latter cannot render.

that is impossible, it is impossible for them to have the power to believe; and it necessarily follows that God gives the power to believe exclusively to the faithful.

Another question. It may be said to them: If the power to disbelieve were the power to believe, the power to disbelieve would be desired of God. But since we see the faithful desiring of God the power to believe and shunning the power to disbelieve, we know that what they desire is not what they shun.

Another question. It may also be said to them: Tell us about the ability to believe—is it not a favor from God? They will certainly answer yes. Then it may be said to them: And so is not the bestowal of favors a power that belongs to the Bestower of favors, by which He both bestows and withholds favors? [425] There is no doubt of an affirmative answer to that,[425] because it is the distinction between favor and merit. It may also be said to them: It belongs to the Bestower of favors, if He enjoins faith, to suspend His power of bestowing favors and not bestow favors by it, and so to enjoin faith upon them, even if He deserts them and does not give them the ability to believe; and this is our belief and our opinion.

Answer. It may also be said to them: Has God power over the grace He gives the infidels, [p. 54] so that they may be faithful? Wherefore if they say no, they assert God's impotence. May God be very far above that! But if they say, "Yes, He has power over it, and if He gave them grace, they would surely believe," they abandon their belief and believe the truth.

Question. If they ask concerning God's words "God willeth not injustice to His servants" [426] and concerning His words "God willeth not injustice to the worlds," [427] the answer is: Its meaning is that He wills not to do *them* injustice, because He said, "God does not will injustice to *them*;" but He did not say, "He does not will their injustice to *each other*," and therefore He does not will to do them injustice, even if He wills their injustice to each other, that is, He does not will to do them injustice, even if He wills that they do each other injustice.

Question. If they ask concerning God's words "no defect canst thou see in the creation of the Merciful," [428] and say, "Infidelity is a defect, and so how can it belong to the creation of God?," the answer concerning it is that God said, "... who hath created seven heavens, one above

[425] *H*: "There is no doubt of the answer to that."

[426] Qur'ān 40. 33. [427] Ibid. 3. 104. [428] Ibid. 67. 3.

another. No defect canst thou see in the creation of the Merciful. Repeat the gaze. Seest thou a single flaw? Then twice more repeat the gaze. Thy gaze shall return to thee dulled and weary;"[429] wherefore He merely means in this passage "And thou shalt not see in the *heavens* any flaw," because He mentions the creation of the heavens, but does not mention infidelity; and if this is in accordance with our belief, their belief is false.

Answer. It may also be said to them: Do you recognize that God gave a gracious gift to Abū Bakr the Veracious, which He gave to him particularly, and not to Abū Jahl,[430] originally? Wherefore, if they say no, their belief is vile; but if they say yes, they abandon their opinions, because they do not believe that God bestowed a particular favor upon the faithful originally that He did not bestow upon the infidels.

Question. If they ask concerning God's words "We have not created the heavens and the earth and what is between them for nought,"[431] and say, "This verse proves that God does not create what is useless," the answer concerning it is that God had in mind the falsification of the polytheists who say, "There is no resurrection, or quickening, or restoration," and so He said, "I have not created them in such wise that I shall not reward him who obeys Me, and punish him who disobeys Me"—such as the infidels who thought that there was no resurrection, or quickening, or reward, or punishment. Do you not agree that He said, "That is the thought of the infidels; but woe to the infidels because of the fire!"[432] and explained it by His words "Shall We treat those who believe and do the things that are right like those who propagate evil [p. 55] on earth? Shall We treat the God-fearing like the impious?,"[433] that is, "We do not make them equal by destroying them all or restoring them, that their way should be one way"?

Question. If they ask concerning God's words "Whatever good betideth thee is from God, and whatever evil betideth thee is from thyself,"[434] the answer concerning that is that God said, "And if good betide them," (meaning "abundance" and "good fortune") "they say, 'This is from God,' and if evil betide them," (meaning "poor soil," "drought," and "mishaps") "they say, 'This is from thee'" (that is, "by thine ill luck"), and then God said, "O Muḥammad, 'Say, "All is

[429] Ibid. 67. 3, 4.

[430] This name, "father of folly," was given to 'Amr ibn Hišām, one of the Prophet's bitterest enemies.

[431] Qur'ān 38. 26.

[432] L. c.

[433] Ibid. 38. 27.

[434] Ibid. 4. 81.

from God. But what hath come to these people that they are not near to understanding what is told them?,"'"[435] with reference to their words "Whatever good befalls thee is from God, and whatever evil befalls thee is from thyself," and so He struck out their words, because the speech that precedes proves it, for the Qur'ān does not contradict itself, and He cannot say, in the one verse, that all is from God, and then say, in the other verse, which follows it, that all is not from God, in such wise that what betides men is not what betides them; and this makes clear the falsity of their dependence on this verse, and makes the proof against them a necessary consequence.

Question. If they ask concerning God's words "I have not created *jinn* and men, but that they should worship me,"[436] the answer concerning that is that God means only the faithful and not the infidels, because He tells us that He creates for Jahannam most of His creatures; and so those He creates for Jahannam He reckons and numbers, and writes them down by their names and the names of their fathers and their mothers, but does not do these things to those He creates for His worship.

Question Concerning the Imposition of Religious Obligations (*taklīf*).[437]

It may be said to them: Has not God imposed it as an obligation upon the infidels that they hearken to the truth, and receive it, and believe in God? They will certainly say yes. Then it may be said to them: And so God has said, "They were not able to hearken,"[438] and, "and who had no power to hear,"[439] and has imposed upon them the obligation of hearkening to the truth.

Answer. It may be said to them: Has not God said, "On the day when legs shall be bared, and they shall be called upon to worship and shall not be able"?[440] Does not God command them to worship in the next life? We are told in the *ḫabar* that He will place in the loins of the hypocrites as it were slabs of stone, and they will not be able to worship, and this is a proof of what we believe, namely, that it is not necessary for God, if He commands them, to enable them to fulfil His commandment; and this shows the falsity of the belief of the Qadariyyah.

[435] Ibid. 4. 80.

[436] Ibid. 51. 56.

[437] This term was later given a wider application, so that it included not only the obligation to believe, but also the duty to understand what was believed (see Macdonald, Muslim Theology 317).

[438] Qur'ān 11. 22.

[439] Ibid. 18. 101.

[440] Ibid. 68. 42.

[p. 56] QUESTION CONCERNING THE TORTURE OF INFANTS.[441]

It may also be said to them: Does not God torture infants in this world with the torture He causes to befall them—as, for example, leprosy, which cuts off their hands and their feet, and other things besides with which He tortures them—and is that not seemly and legitimate? Wherefore if they say yes, the answer is: Then, if these things are just, you cannot deny that He tortures them in the next life, and that it is just on His part. Then if they say, "He tortures them in this world that their fathers may take warning by them," the answer is: And so, if He does it to them in this world that their fathers may take warning by them, and it is just on His part, why does He not torture the infants of the infidels in the next life,[442] in order to distress their fathers by their tortures, and why is that not just on His part? It is said in the *ḫabar*: "A fire will be kindled for the infants on the Day of Resurrection, and then it will be said to them, 'Rush headlong into it,' and whoso rushes headlong into it I will cause to enter Paradise, and whoso does not rush headlong into it, I will cause to enter Hell."[443]

Question. It has been said concerning infants, and related on the authority of the Apostle, that the Banū Ismā'īl—their[444] . . . in Hell. . . .

Answer. It may also be said to them: Has not God said, "Let the hands of Abū Lahab perish, and let himself perish! His wealth and his gains shall avail him not. Burned shall he be at the fiery flame!"?[445] He commanded him, nevertheless, to believe, but He must have known that he would not believe. God is sincere in saying of him that he would not believe; nevertheless, He commanded him to believe, for faith and the knowledge that it will not exist do not exist together. Nobody has the power to believe although He knows that he will not believe; and since this is so, God has enjoined upon Abū Lahab a thing he is powerless to do, because He commands him to believe, yet He knows that he will not believe.

Question. It may also be said to them: Does not God enjoin faith

[441] *Maqālāt* 253: "Most of the Mu'tazilah believe that God tortures them as an example to adults and afterwards makes it up to them; for if He did not make it up to them, His torturing them would be an injustice." See also ibid. 55, 56, 111, 125, 126.

[442] Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (*Musnad* VI 208) records a tradition in which the Prophet says to 'Ā'išah, regarding the children of the polytheists, "If I wish, I can let you hear their cries in Hell."

[443] On this question cf. Schreiner, "Zur Geschichte des Aš'aritenthums" 105 f.

[444] The letters omitted give no sense. The text of this question is defective. See note to *E* ad loc.

[445] Qur'ān 111. 1-3.

upon one He knows will not believe? Wherefore if they say yes, it may be said to them: Then you have the power to believe and it comes easily to you! If they say no, they agree, but if they say yes, they think that men have power to depart from the knowledge of God. May God be very far above that!

REPLY TO THE MU'TAZILAH.

Abū 'l-Ḥasan al-Aš'arī said: It may also be said to them: Do not the Magians assert that Satan has power over evil, over which God has not power, and are they not infidels because they believe this? They will certainly answer [p. 57] yes. Therefore it may be said to them: Then since you think that the infidels have power over infidelity, but God has not power over it, you exceed the Magians in their belief, because you believe, with them, that Satan has power over evil and God has not power over it. This is among the things that the *ḫabar* related on the authority of the Apostle of God explains: "The Qadariyyah are the Magians of this Community;" and they are "the Magians of this Community" only because they hold the beliefs of the Magians.

Question. The Qadariyyah think that we merit the name "*qadar*" because we believe that God decrees evil and infidelity; wherefore he who asserts the existence of the *qadar* is a *Qadarī*, and not he who does not assert it. Therefore it may be said to them: The *Qadarī* is he who asserts that he himself and not his Lord has the *qadar*, and that he, and not his Creator, decrees his deeds. That is the usage of the pure Arabic, because the goldsmith is he who asserts that he does goldsmith's work, and not he who says that it is done for him, and the carpenter is he who makes carpentry his business, and not he who asserts that carpenter's work is done for him. Therefore, since you assert that you, and not your Lord, decree your works and do them, you must be Qadariyyah; but we are not Qadariyyah, because we do not make the works our business instead of our Lord's, and we do not believe that we decree them, and not He; but we believe that they are decreed for us.

Answer. It may also be said to them: If he who asserts that God decrees is a *Qadarī*, then you must admit, since you think that God decrees the heavens and the earth, and decrees acts of obedience, that you are Qadariyyah; but since you are not compelled to admit this, your belief is false, and your argument contradicts itself.

Question Concerning the Sealing.[446]

It may be said to them: Has not God said, "their hearts and their ears hath God sealed up, and over their ears is a covering," [447] and, "And whom God shall please to guide, that man's breast will He open to Islām; but whom He shall please to mislead, strait and narrow will He make his breast"? [448] Then tell us about those whose hearts and ears God has sealed—do you think that He guides them, and opens their breasts to Islām, and yet causes them to err? Wherefore, if they say yes, their belief is self-contradictory. How can the lock, of which God spoke: "Are locks upon their hearts?" [449] exist with the opening, and the straitening with the capacity, and guidance with error? If these things exist together, orthodoxy and heterodoxy, which is the opposite of orthodoxy, can exist together, and infidelity and faith together, in one heart. But if this is impossible, what you believe is impossible. Then, if they say, "The sealing and the straitening and error—it is not possible for them to exist together with God's opening of the breast," the answer is: And likewise guidance does not exist together with error; [p. 58] and since this is so, God does not open the breasts of the infidels to faith, but on the contrary seals their hearts and locks them to the truth and hardens them, as when the Prophet of God, Moses, wished ill to his people and said, "O our Lord, confound their riches and harden their hearts, that they may not believe until they see the grievous torment" [450] (God has also said, "The prayer of you both is heard"); [451] and God has said, speaking of the infidels, that they said, "Our hearts are under shelter from thy teachings, and in our ears is a deafness, and between us and thee there is a veil;" [452] and therefore, since God creates the shelter in their hearts, and the lock, and the going astray (because God said, "And when they went astray, God led their hearts astray"), [453] and the sealing and the straightening of the breasts, then enjoins faith upon them that He knows will not exist, He enjoins upon them that of which

[446] "The Mu'tazilah disagree concerning that question and there are two views: (a) some think that the sealing and the marking (*ṭab'*) of the infidels' hearts are the witness and the decision that they do not believe, but those things do not prevent them from believing; (b) and certain ones say, 'The sealing and the marking are a blackness in the heart, just as it is said that a sword is marked (*ṭabi'a*) when it is rusted; nevertheless, those things do not prevent them from doing what God has commanded them to do.' They also say, 'God makes those things a mark for them, by which mark in their hearts the angels distinguish the friends of God from His enemies'" (*Maqālāt* 259).

[447] Qur'ān 2. 6.

[448] Ibid. 6. 125.

[449] Ibid. 47. 26.

[450] Ibid. 10. 88.

[451] Ibid. 10. 89.

[452] Ibid. 41. 4.

[453] Ibid. 61. 5.

they are not capable. Since God creates in their hearts such straitening against faith as we have mentioned, then is the straitening against faith anything except the unbelief that is in their hearts? This makes it clear that God creates their unbelief and their disobedience.

Answer. It may also be said to them: God said to His Prophet, "and had We not settled thee, thou hadst well nigh leaned to them a little;" [454] and He said, speaking of Joseph, "But she longed for him, and he had longed for her, had he not seen a token from his Lord." [455] Now inform us concerning that settlement and token—does God do it, or what is like it, to the infidels? Wherefore, if they say no, they abandon belief in the *qadar*; but if they say yes, the answer is: Then, since the settlement keeps the Prophet from leaning to them, if God does it to the infidels, they must be settled and kept from infidelity; but, since they are not dissociated from infidelity, it is simply not true that He gives them any such settlement as He gave the Prophet—which settlement kept him from leaning to the infidels.

Question Concerning the Reservation (*istiṯnā'*).[456]

It may be said to them: Tell us about a man's seeking of another what is due him, and the latter's saying to him, "By God, I will surely give it thee tomorrow, if God wishes"—does not God wish him to give the other man his due? Then, if they say yes, it may be said to them: Do you not think that, if the morrow comes and he does not give him his due, he does not violate his oath? They will certainly answer yes.[457] Then it may be said to them: But, if God wished him to give the other man his due, he would certainly violate his oath if he did not give it to him, just as, if he said, "By God, I will give thee thy due when dawn comes on the morrow," and then it came and he did not give it to him, he would be a violator of his oath.

Question Concerning the Appointed Terms.[458]

It may be said to them: Has not God said, "And when their appointed term has come, they shall not retard it an hour, [p. 59] and they shall

[454] Ibid. 17. 76.

[455] Ibid. 12. 24.

[456] The name given to the practice of appending to a statement the words "if God wills." The word was also applied to God's making an exception to a revelation or allowing Himself an alternative—a question discussed among the Murji'ah (*Maqālāt* 144 ff.).

[457] Meaning "We think that he does not violate his oath."

[458] "The Mu'tazilah disagree concerning that question and hold two different beliefs: (a) most of the Mu'tazilah say, 'The appointed term is the time at which, God knows, a man will die or be killed, and therefore, if he is killed, he

not advance it;" [459] and has He not also said, "And by no means will God delay a soul when its appointed term has come"? [460] They will certainly answer yes. It may be said to them: Then tell us about him whom someone kills violently—do you think that he is killed in his appointed term or at his appointed term? Wherefore, if they say yes, they agree, believe the truth, and abandon the *qadar*. But if they say no, the answer is: Then what [461] is the appointed term of this murdered person? And so, if they say, "The time at which, God knew,[462] if he had not been killed, he would have married a woman, whom He knew to be the woman destined for him, even though he did not actually marry her," and, "When, it was known to God,[462] if he had not been killed, but had survived, he would have disbelieved, that Hell would be his home," [463] since this is impossible, it is impossible that the time to which he does not attain should be a term appointed for him, inasmuch as these words do not support the words of God "And when their appointed term has come, they shall not retard it an hour, and they shall not advance it." [464]

Another question. It may also be said to them: If the slayer, according to you, has the power not to kill his victim (and, in that case, of course, the latter would go on living), then he has the power to cut short his appointed term and send him on before his appointed term, and he has the power to retard him from his appointed term; and so man, according to your belief, has the power to anticipate the appointed terms of human beings and to retard them, and has the power to cause human

is killed at his appointed term, and if he dies, he dies at his appointed term;' while (b) certain ignorant members of the sect stand alone in thinking that the time until which, God knows, a man will survive, if he is not killed, and not the time at which he is killed, is his appointed term.

"Those who think that the appointed term is the time at which, God knows, a man will die or be killed, disagree as to the person who is killed, whether, if he were not killed, he would die or not; and there are three beliefs: (a) some believe that the man would die at this time, even if he were not killed (the belief of Abu 'l-Huḏayl); (b) others believe that, if the murderer did not kill him, he might either die or live; (c) still others regard the second belief as impossible" (*Maqālāt* 256, 257, and notes).

[459] Qur'ān 7. 32. [460] Ibid. 63. 11. [461] Literally, "when?"

[462] The punctuation in these two places indicates what I conceive to be the real sense of the Arabic. If we translate "When it was known to God that," etc., it is implied that the matter in question became known to God at a certain time. Since God's knowledge is eternal, this is impossible.

[463] Cf. Introduction, 27.

[464] Qur'ān 7. 32. Common sense is certainly on al-Aš'arī's side in this argument. An appointed term that the person for whom it has been appointed does not reach or passes is simply not an appointed term.

beings to survive and make them attain, and to send forth their spirits; and this is heterodoxy in the Religion.

Question Concerning the Provision of Sustenance.[465]

It may also be said to them: Tell us about him who takes food by force and eats it as a forbidden thing—has God provided him with that forbidden thing as sustenance? Then, if they say yes, they abandon the *qadar*; but if they say no, the answer is: Then he who eats the forbidden thing all his life—God does not provide him with anything with which to nourish his body. It may be said to them: If somebody else forces that food upon him and makes him eat it until he dies—then this man, and not God, is a provider, according to you. (This is a confession on their part that creatures have two providers, one of them providing the permitted, the other the forbidden, and that men's flesh grows and their bones wax strong, God not providing for them that with which they are nourished.) But since you say that God does not provide him with the forbidden, you must admit that God does not feed him with it and does not make it maintenance for his body, and that his flesh and his body subsist and his bones wax strong by another than God, who is the one who provides him with the forbidden; and this is great infidelity, if, indeed, they are borne with at all.

Another Question Concerning the Provision of Sustenance.

It may also be said to them: Why do you deny that God provides the forbidden? Therefore, if they say, "Because, if He provided the forbidden, He would transfer the ownership of the forbidden," it may be said to them: Tell us about the infant who is nourished by his mother's milk, and about the beast that feeds upon the hay—who provides them with those things? If they say, "God," the answer is: Does He transfer the ownership to them? [p. 60] does He transfer it to the beast? But if they say no, the answer is: Then why do you think that, if He provides the forbidden, He transfers the ownership of the forbidden, when God sometimes provides a thing without transferring its ownership? It may also be said to them: Does God give man power to do the forbid-

[465] "The Mu'tazilah believe that . . . the provision of sustenance is God's provision, and therefore he who deprives a man of goods or food and devours it, devours what God has provided for another and not for him. They all think that God does not provide the forbidden, just as He does not transfer the ownership of the forbidden, and that God provides with sustenance only those to whom He transfers the ownership of the things He gives and not those who take them forcibly" (*Maqālāt* 257 and notes).

den and not transfer its ownership to him? And so, if they say yes, it may be said to them: Then you cannot deny that He provides him with the forbidden, even if He does not transfer its ownership to him.

Answer. It may be said to them: If the grace of the faithful is God's work, you cannot deny that the desertion of the infidels proceeds from God; and if not, then, if you think that God gives the infidels the help of His grace that they may believe, you ought to say, "He preserves them from infidelity." But how can He preserve them from infidelity, when infidelity on their part occurs? If, on the other hand, they assert that God deserts them, the answer is: Then is not desertion on the part of God the infidelity that He creates in them? If they say yes, they agree, and if they say no, the answer is: Then what is that desertion He creates? If they say, "His leaving free the issue between them and infidelity," the answer is: Is it not part of your belief that God leaves the issue free between the faithful and infidelity? If they say yes, the answer is: Then if the desertion is leaving the issue free between them and infidelity, you must admit that He deserts the faithful because He leaves the issue free between them and infidelity; and this is a departure from the Religion. They will undoubtedly assert that God gives them over to the infidelity that He creates in them, and therefore they give up belief in the *qadar*.

Question. If anyone of the people of the *qadar* asks, "Is a human being ever so placed that he has not either a benefit, for which he must thank God, or a trial, patience towards which is necessary for him?," the answer is: A human being is never without a benefit or a trial; and he must thank God for the benefit, but trials are of two sorts: some requiring patience (such as sickness and diseases and similar things), and others requiring complete separation from them (such as infidelity and disobedience).

Question. If they ask, "Which is better: the good or he who is the source of the good?," the answer is: He the good from whom confers benefits by his agency, is better than the good. On the other hand, if they say, "Which is worse: evil or he who is the source of the evil?," the answer is: He the evil from whom does wrong by his agency, is worse than evil. Nevertheless, evil comes from God as a creature, but is just by His agency; and in view of that we are not compelled to admit what is implied in your question,[466] inasmuch as you contradict your principles; because if he who is the source of evil is worse than evil, God has created Satan, who is worse than the evil of which he is the source, and therefore He has created what is the worst of all evils;[467] and this is a contradiction in your religion and a discordant note in your doctrine (*madhab*).

[466] His opponents seek to make him admit that, if good and evil are both from God, He must at the same time be better than the good and worse than the evil—an absurd opinion. Therefore He can be the author only of the good.

[p. 61] Question Concerning Guidance.[468]

It may be said to the Mu'tazilah: Has not God said, "Elif Lām Mīm. No doubt is there about this Book; it is a guidance to those who fear God;"[469] and so He tells us that the Qur'ān is guidance to those who fear God? They will certainly answer yes. Then it may be said to them: Has not God spoken of the Qur'ān and said, "but as to those who believe not, there is a thickness in their ears, and to them it is a blindness,"[470] telling us that the Qur'ān is a blindness to the infidels? They will certainly answer yes. It may be said to them: Then can the Qur'ān be a blindness to him of whom God has told us that it is a guidance to him? They will certainly answer no. And so it may be said to them: Then, just as the Qur'ān cannot be a blindness to him to whom God has told us that it is a guidance, likewise it cannot be a guidance to him to whom God has told us it is a blindness.

Another question. Then it may be said to them: If God's summons to faith can be guidance to him who accepts it and to him who does not accept it, you cannot deny that the summons of Iblīs to infidelity is misguidance to him who accepts it and to him who does not accept it. And so if the summons of Iblīs to infidelity is misguidance to the infidels who accept it from him, but not to the faithful who do not accept it from him, you cannot deny that God's summons to faith is guidance to the faithful who accept it from Him, but not to the infidels who do not accept it from Him. If not, then what is the difference between them?

[467] And it would follow from this that He was worse than the worst of evils (since He is the latter's source, as Creator), and therefore the worst of beings instead of the best.

[468] "The Mu'tazilah disagree as to whether or not God may be said to guide the infidels, and there are two views: (a) most of the Mu'tazilah believe that God guides the infidels, but they are not guided, and favors them by giving them the power to be obedient, but they are not favored, and does what is salutary for them, but they do not respond to His salutary treatment; (b) certain ones say, 'We do not believe that God guides the infidels in any specific way, by giving them explanations or directing them, because God's explanation and summons are guidance for those who accept and not for those who do not accept, just as the summons of Iblīs is misguidance to those who accept, and not to those who do not accept'" (*Maqālāt* 259, 260).

[469] Qur'ān 2. 1.

[470] Ibid. 41. 44.

Another question. It may be said to them: Did not God say, "He will mislead many by it"?[471] Do His words "He will mislead many by it" prove that He does not mislead all, because, if He had meant all, He would have said, "He will mislead *all* by it," and since He said, "He will mislead *many* by it," we know that He does not mislead all? They will certainly answer yes. Wherefore it may be said to them: Then you cannot deny that His words "and He will guide many by it"[472] are a proof that He does not mean all, because if He had meant all, He would have said, "and He will guide *all* by it;" and therefore, since He said, "and He will guide many by it," we know that He does not guide all; and this is a nullification of your belief that God guides all creatures.

Another question. It may be said to them: If you believe that God's summons to faith is guidance to the infidels who do not accept from God His command, you cannot deny that God's summons to faith is profit and a salutary thing and right direction to the infidels who do not accept from God His command, and you cannot deny that they have preservation (*ʿiṣmah*) from infidelity (even if they are not preserved from infidelity), and that it is grace to believe (even if they are not given grace to believe). From this it necessarily follows that God directs the infidels aright, and does what is salutary for them, and preserves them, and gives them grace to believe, even though they be infidels; and this is an [p. 62] impossible thing, because the infidels are deserted, and how can they be given grace to believe when they are deserted? And so if an infidel can be given grace to believe, you cannot deny that faith actually occurs in his case; and if this is considered possible, you cannot deny that what you believe is impossible.

Question Concerning Error.[473]

It may be said to them: Does God lead the infidels astray from faith or from infidelity? Wherefore, if they say, "From infidelity," the answer is: Then how can they err from infidelity, departing from it, when they are infidels? If they say, "He leads them astray from faith," they abandon their belief. But if they say, "We believe that God misleads them, but does not mislead them from any specific thing," the answer is:

[471] Ibid. 2. 24. [472] L. c.

[473] "Most of the Muʿtazilah say, 'It may be supposed that the meaning of God's "leading astray" is naming them and judging them erring. It may also be supposed that when they err from God's command He tells us that He misleads them, that is, they err from His religion. It may also be supposed that the "leading astray" means that God ceases to produce the gift and direction and strengthening that He gives the faithful, and therefore the cessation of

What is the difference between you and him who says that God guides the faithful, but does not guide them to any specific thing? And so if it is impossible for Him to guide the faithful without guiding them to faith, you cannot deny that it is impossible for Him to mislead the infidels without misleading them from faith.

Another question. It may be said to them: What is the meaning of God's words "but the wicked shall He cause to err"?[474] Wherefore, if they say, "Its meaning is that He calls them erring and convicts them of error," the answer is: Does not God address the Arabs in their classical language, and has He not said therefore, "in the clear Arabic tongue,"[475] and, "We have not sent any apostle, save with the speech of his own people"?[476] They will certainly answer yes. Therefore it may be said to them: Then, if God has revealed the Qurʾān in the Arabic tongue, where do you find in the classical Arabic language that one may say, "So-and-so misled so-and-so," meaning "He called him erring"? Then if they say, "We find it said, when a man says of an erring man, 'I have found him erring,'" the answer is, We find the Arabs saying, "So-and-so found so-and-so erring," when he calls him erring, but we do not find them saying, "So-and-so misled so-and-so," in this sense. Therefore, when God says, "but the wicked shall He cause to err,"[477] its meaning cannot be naming and judgment. Since it is not correct according to the Arabs to say, "So-and-so misled so-and-so," when he calls him erring, your interpretation is false, since it is contrary to the Arabic tongue.

Another question. It may also be said to them: If you say, "God misleads the infidels because He calls them erring," (but that is not classical usage, as you claim), then you must admit that, when the Prophet calls a people erring and corrupt, he misleads and corrupts them, because he calls them erring and corrupt; and since this is impossible, it is untrue that the meaning of "The wicked shall He cause to err" is naming and judgment, as you claim.

these things is "leading astray" and "leading astray" is an act done in time. It may also be supposed that it means that, since He finds them erring, He tells us that He misleads them, just as it is said, "So-and-so made so-and-so a coward," when he finds him a coward.'

"Some of them say, 'God's leading the infidels astray is His causing them to perish and a punishment of them on His part,' and they use as an argument God's words 'in bewilderment and folly' (Qurʾān 54. 47) (they believe that the folly is the folly of Hell), and God's words 'when we shall have lain hidden in the earth' (Qurʾān 32. 9) (that is, 'we have perished and our particles are dispersed')" (*Maqālāt* 261, 262).

[474] Qurʾān 14. 32. [475] Ibid. 26. 195. [476] Ibid. 14. 4. [477] Ibid. 14. 32.

[p. 63] *Answer.* It may also be said to them: Has not God said, "Guided indeed is he whom God guideth; but for him whom He misleadeth, thou shalt by no means find a patron, a director,"[478] and "How shall God guide a people who disbelieved after their belief?"?[479] Therefore He says explicitly that He does not guide them. He has also said, "And God calleth to the abode of peace; and He guideth whom He will in the right way."[480] Therefore He makes the summons universal and the guidance particular. He has also said, "He guideth not the unbelieving people."[481] Then, since God tells us that He does not guide the unbelieving people, how can anyone say that He guides the infidels when He asserts that He does not guide them and when He says, "Thou truly canst not guide whom thou desirest; but God guideth whom He wisheth,"[482] and when He says, "Their guidance is not thine affair, but God guideth whom He wisheth,"[483] and when He says, "Had We wished, We had certainly given to every soul its guidance"?[484] If this is possible it is possible to say, "He misleads the faithful," when He says, "He whom God guides is the guided,"[485] and when He says, "guidance to those who fear God."[486] Wherefore, if that is not so, you cannot deny that He cannot guide the infidels, when He says, "He guideth not the unbelieving people,"[487] and in face of the rest of the verses in which we have examined you.

Answer. It may also be said to them: Has not God said, "What thinkest thou? He who hath made a god of his passions, and whom God causeth wilfully to err, and whose ears and whose heart He hath sealed up, and over whose sight He hath placed a veil . . ."?[488] They will certainly answer yes. Then it may be said to them: Then does He mislead them that they may err, or that they may be guided? If they say, "He misleads them that they may be guided," the answer is: How can He mislead them that they may be guided? If this is possible, He can guide them that they may err; but if He cannot guide the faithful that they may err, you cannot deny that He cannot mislead the infidels that they may be guided.

Answer. It may also be said to them: Since you think that God guides the infidels, but they are not guided, you cannot deny that He benefits them but they are not benefited, and that He does what is salutary for them but they show no effect of His salutary treatment. If He can benefit those who are not benefited by His benefits, you cannot deny that He harms those who suffer no harm. But if He harms only those who suffer harm, then likewise He benefits only those who are benefited. If He could benefit those who are not benefited, He could enable those who are not enabled; but since that is impossible, He cannot benefit those who are not benefited or guide those who are not guided.

[478] Ibid. 18. 16.
[479] Ibid. 3. 80.
[480] Ibid. 10. 26.
[481] Ibid. 2. 266.
[482] Ibid. 28. 56.
[483] Ibid. 2. 274.
[484] Ibid. 32. 13.
[485] Ibid. 7. 177.
[486] Ibid. 2. 1.
[487] Ibid. 2. 266.
[488] Ibid. 45. 22.

Question. You put this question to us and say, "Has not God said, 'the month of Ramaḍān, in which the Qur'ān was sent down as guidance to man, and explanation'?[489] Then you cannot deny that the Qur'ān is [p. 64] guidance to the infidels and to the faithful." The answer is: The verse has a particular meaning, because God has already explained to us that He guides those who fear Him, and told us that He does not guide the infidels. The Qur'ān does not contradict itself, and so it is necessarily true that His words "guidance to man" mean the faithful and not the infidels.

Question. If anyone says, "Has not God said, 'Thou shalt warn only him who followeth the admonition,'[490] and, 'thou art only charged with the warning of those who fear it;'[491] and has not the Prophet warned him who follows the admonition, and him who does not follow it, and him who fears, and him who does not fear?," the answer is yes. Wherefore if they say, "Then you cannot deny that His words 'guidance to those who fear God' mean guidance to them and to those who are not they," the answer is: The meaning of God's words "Thou shalt warn only him who followeth the admonition" is merely "He who follows the admonition shall be benefited by thy warning." His words "thou art only charged with the warning of those who fear it" mean that he who fears the hour and dreads the punishment in it will be benefited by the warning. God has told us in another place in the Qur'ān that He warned the infidels and said, "Verily, those who do not believe—alike is it to them if thou warn them or warn them not; they will not believe;"[492] and this is information (*ḫabar*) concerning the infidels. He also said, "but warn thy relatives of nearer kin,"[493] and, "I warn you of a tempest, like the tempest of 'Ād and Ṯamūd;"[494] and this is an address to the infidels. Wherefore, since God tells us in some verses of the Qur'ān that He warns the infidels, just as He tells us in other verses that He warns him who fears it and him who follows the admonition, it is necessarily true, by the Qur'ān, that God warns both the faithful and the infidels. And so since God tells us that it is guidance to those who fear God and blindness to the infidels, and that He does not guide the infidels, it is necessarily true that the Qur'ān is guidance to the faithful and not to the infidels.

[489] Ibid. 2. 181.
[490] Ibid. 36. 10.
[491] Ibid. 79. 45.
[492] Ibid., 2. 5.
[493] Ibid. 26. 214.
[494] Ibid. 41. 12.

Question. If any one asks about God's words "And as to Ṯamūd, We had vouchsafed them guidance; but to guidance did they prefer blindness," [495] and says, "Were not Ṯamūd infidels, and has not God told us that He guided them?," the answer is: The matter is not as you suppose. Regarding this verse there are two answers. The first of them is that Ṯamūd is in two parts: the infidels and the faithful. The latter are those He tells us that He rescued with Ṣāliḥ, in His words "We rescued Ṣāliḥ and those who believed with him." [496] Those of Ṯamūd God has in mind as having been guided by Him are the faithful, and not the infidels, because God explains to us in the Qur'ān that He does not guide the infidels; and the Qur'ān does not contradict itself, but, on the contrary, one part tallies with another. And so if He tells us in one place that He does not guide the infidels, then tells us in [p. 65] another place that He guided Ṯamūd, we know that He has in mind only the faithful of Ṯamūd and not the infidels. The other answer is that God means people of Ṯamūd who were believers, then apostatized; and so He tells us that He guided them, but they preferred, after guidance, unbelief to faith, yet they had been believers in their state of guidance. And so if anyone says, objecting to the first answer, "How can He say, 'We had vouchsafed them guidance,' and mean the faithful of Ṯamūd, and say, 'but they preferred,' meaning the infidels among them, who are non-believers?," it may be said to him: It is correct, in the classical language in which the Qur'ān is written, for Him to say, "We had vouchsafed them guidance," and mean the faithful of Ṯamūd, and to say, "but they preferred," meaning the infidels among them. God's words present similar examples: God said, "But God chose not to punish them while thou wast with them," [497] meaning the infidels; then He said, "nor would God punish them when they sued for pardon," [498] meaning the faithful; then He said, "nothing is there on their part why God should not punish them," [499] meaning the infidels. There is nothing contrary, according to the grammarians, to the correctness of speech in these terms: namely, that in its literal sense it should apply to one genus, but the thing meant by it be two genera. And so the objection the objector has raised is false, and it is a proof of his ignorance.

Chapter Containing the Traditions Cited Concerning the *Qadar*.

Mu'āwiyah ibn 'Amr relates the following tradition: Zā'idah [500] told us, Sulaymān al-A'maš [501] told us on the authority of Zayd ibn Wahb, and he on the authority of 'Abdallāh ibn Mas'ūd,[502] The Apostle of God,

[495] Ibid. 41. 16.
[496] Ibid. 11. 69.
[497] Ibid. 8. 33.
[498] L. c.
[499] Ibid. 8. 34.
[500] Died 777.
[501] Died ca. 765.
[502] Died ca. 652.

who is the truthful and the trustworthy, told us, "The nature of each of you is assembled in the womb of his mother in forty nights. Then it is a clot of blood the same length of time, and then it is an embryo the same length of time. Then God sends the angels," said he, "and four words of command are given. It is said, 'Write his appointed term, and his sustenance, and his work, and whether he will be miserable or happy.' Then He breathes into him the spirit." He said, "One of you shall work the work of the people of Paradise, until there be between him and them but a cubit's space, but the writ shall forestall him, and he shall work the work of the people of Hell, and enter therein; and one of you shall work the work of the people of Hell, until there be between him and them but a cubit's space, and the writ shall forestall him, and the work of the people of Paradise shall be sealed to his account, and he shall enter therein." [503]

Mu'āwiyah ibn 'Amr relates the following tradition: Zā'idah told us on the authority of al-A'maš, and he on the authority of Abū Ṣāliḥ,[504] and he on the authority of Abū Hurayrah, and he on the authority of the Prophet, "Adam and Moses argued. Moses said, 'O Adam, thou art he whom God created with His hand and breathed into thee of His spirit. Thou hast seduced men and sent them forth from Paradise.' Adam said, 'Thou art Moses, whom God chose by His words. Thou blamest me for a work that God wrote down against me before He created the heavens.'" [p. 66] He said, "So Adam defeated Moses in the argument." [505]

Mālik also related the *ḥadīṯ* of Adam's defeating Moses in the argument, on the authority of Abu 'z-Zinād,[506] and he on the authority of al-A'raj, and he on the authority of Abū Hurayah, and he on the authority of the Prophet. This proves the falsity of the belief of the Qadariyyah, who say that God does not know a thing until it is, because if God writes it and commands it to be written, He does not cause a thing He does not know to be written. May He be too great and holy for that! God has said, "and not a leaf falls but He knoweth it, neither is there a grain in the dark places of the earth, there is neither moisture nor dryness, but it is noted in a distinct writing." [507] He has also said, "There is no moving thing on earth whose nourishment dependeth not on God; He knoweth its haunts and final resting place." [508] He has also said, "God hath taken count of them, though they have forgotten them." [509]

[503] Wensinck, Handbook 54; al-Buḫārī, ed. Krehl IV 251, 469.
[504] Died 719.
[505] Wensinck, op. cit. 11; al-Buḫārī, IV 255, 485.
[506] Died 748.
[507] Qur'ān 6. 59.
[508] Ibid. 11. 8.
[509] Ibid. 58. 7.

He has also said, "He hath taken count of them and numbered them with numbering." 510 He has also said, "He embraceth all things by knowledge," 511 and, "and taketh count of all that concerneth them." 512 He has also said, "knowing everything." 513 Therefore those verses explain that He knows 514 all things; for God tells us that His creatures will come to life and arise, and the infidels will be eternally in Hell, and the Prophets and the faithful will enter into Paradise, and that the resurrection will take place (yet the resurrection has not taken place since this revelation); 515 wherefore that proves that God knows what is going to be before it is. God has said concerning the people of Hell, "but though they should return, they would surely go back," 516 wherefore He tells us concerning what is not, how it would be if it were. He has said, "But what was the state of generations past? He said, 'The knowledge thereof is with my Lord in the Book of His decrees. My Lord erreth not, nor forgetteth'" 517 (for He who does not know a thing before it exists does not know it after its completion). May He be very far above the beliefs of the wrongdoers!

Mu'āwiyah ibn 'Amr relates the following tradition: Zā'idah told us on the authority of Sulaymān al-A'maš, and he on the authority of 'Amr ibn Murrah, and he on the authority of 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī Laylā,[518] and he on the authority of 'Abdallāh ibn Rabī'ah, We were with 'Abdallāh, he said, and they mentioned a man and they discussed who created him. The people said, "Has he not one who punishes his hands?" 'Abdallāh said, "Think you, if his head were severed, you could make a hand for it?" They said, "No." 'Abdallāh said, "The semen, when it enters a woman, abides forty days, then it swells with blood, then it becomes a clot a like period of time, then it becomes an embryo a like period of time, then He sends angels, saying, 'Write his appointed term, and his work, and his sustenance, and his mark, and his character, and whether he will fare ill or well,' and you cannot alter his character until you alter his creation."

Mu'āwiyah ibn 'Amr relates the following tradition: Zā'idah told us on the authority of Manṣūr,[519] and he on the authority of Sa'd ibn 'Ubaydah, and he on the authority of Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān,[520] and he on

510 Ibid. 19. 94.
511 Ibid. 65. 12.
512 Ibid. 72. 28.
513 Ibid. 42. 10 and passim.
514 *E*: "does *not* know." Perhaps a sarcastic question: "Then those verses make it clear that He does not know all things, even though God tells us . . . ?"
515 Literally, "yet the resurrection did not take place afterwards."
516 Qur'ān 6. 28.
517 Ibid. 20. 53, 54.
518 Died ca. 702.
519 Probably Ibn al-Mu'tamir (died 749).
520 Probably as-Sulamī (died 693).

the authority of 'Alī,[521] We were at a funeral in Baqī' al-Ġarqad,[522] and the Prophet came and sat, and we about him, and he had a staff of his with him, and he wrote upon the ground with it, and raised his head and said, "There is not among you a living soul, whose place in Paradise or [p. 67] Hell has not been written, and who has not been written down miserable or happy." A man of the company said, "O, Apostle of God, shall we not abide by our writ and claim the work and will not he of us who is of the people of happiness attain to happiness, and he who is of the people of misery attain to misery?" He said, "Act, for all is easy. As for the people of misery, they do easily the works of misery, and as for the people of happiness, they do easily the works of happiness." Then he said, "'But as to him who giveth (alms) and feareth God and yieldeth assent to the Good, to him will We make easy the path to happiness. But as to him who is covetous and bent on riches, and calleth the Good a lie, to him will We make easy the path to misery.'" 523

Mūsā ibn Ismā'īl 524 relates the following tradition: Ḥammād told us, Hišām ibn 'Urwah 525 informed us on the authority of 'Urwah,[526] and he on the authority of 'Ā'išah,[527] that the Apostle of God said, "A man shall work the work of the people of Paradise, even though he be written in the Book among the people of Hell. But if, before his death, he has turned about and worked the work of the people of Hell and then died, then he enters Hell; and a man shall work the work of the people of Hell, even though it be written in the Book that he is of the people of Paradise, but if, before his death, he has turned about and worked the works of the people of Paradise, and then died, then he enters Paradise."

These *hadīṯ* prove that God knows that what will be, will be, and writes it down; and that He writes down the people of Paradise and the people of Hell, and creates them as two groups: a group for Paradise, and a group for the flame. His Book states that clearly when it says, "some hath He guided, and some hath He justly left in error;" 528 and He also says, "when part shall be in Paradise and part in the flame," 529 and He also says, "and some shall be miserable and others blessed." 530 And so God creates the miserable for misery and the blessed for blessedness. He has said, "Many, moreover, of the *jinn* and men have We created for Jahannam." 531 The following has been related on the authority of the Prophet: "God has ordained a people for Paradise, and a people for Hell."

521 Died 661.
522 The cemetery at al-Madīnah.
523 Qur'ān 92. 5-10.
524 Perhaps Abū Salamah (died 837).
525 Died ca. 763.
526 Ibn az-Zubayr (died ca. 711).
527 Died 678.
528 Qur'ān 7. 28.
529 Ibid. 42. 5.
530 Ibid. 11. 107.
531 Ibid. 7. 178.

Proof Concerning the *Qadar*.[532]

Among the things that prove the falsity of the belief of the Qadariyyah are God's words "And when thy Lord brought forth their descendants from the reins of the sons of Adam"[533]—the verse. There is a tradition, on the authority of the Apostle of God, that God rubbed the back of Adam and brought forth his offspring from his back in the likeness of ants, then He compelled them to acknowledge His unity and raised an argument against them, because He said, "and took them to witness against themselves. 'Am I not,' said He, 'your lord?' They said, 'Yes, we witness it.'"[534] God has said, "lest ye should say on the Day of Resurrection, 'Truly, of this were we heedless.'"[535] And so He makes their having been compelled to acknowledge His unity, when He brought them forth from Adam's back, an argument against them, when they deny, in the world, that of which they admitted knowledge when they were first multiplied, then, after the acknowledgment, repudiated.

It has been related on the authority of the Prophet that God seizes [p. 68] a handful for Paradise and a handful for Hell, distinguishing the one from the other; and so misery prevails[536] over the people of misery and blessedness over the people of blessedness. God has said, telling us of the people of Hell, that they said, "O our Lord! our misery

532 "This is the exposition of the belief of the Mu'tazilah concerning the *qadar*. The Mu'tazilah agree that God does not create unbelief or disobedience or any of the acts of others besides Himself—all except one of them, who thinks that God creates them because He creates their names and the decisions regarding them. The latter idea is attributed to Ṣāliḥ Qubbah.

"The Mu'tazilah agree—all except 'Abbād—that God makes faith good and infidelity bad (and the meaning of that is that God makes the appellation for faith and the decision that it is good, and the appellation for infidelity and the decision that it is bad) and that God creates the unbeliever as not an unbeliever and he disbelieves afterwards, and the believer in the same way.

"'Abbād denies that God makes unbelief in any way at all or creates the unbeliever and the believer.

"The Mu'tazilah disagree as to whether or not it may be said that man creates his acts, and there are three views: (a) some think that the meaning of 'doer' and of 'creator' is the same, and that we ought not to use that term concerning man without qualification, because we are forbidden to do so; (b) others say, 'It is an act without instrument or member, and this is impossible on his part;' (c) others say, 'The meaning of "creator" is that the act occurs on his part by predetermination, and therefore everyone whose act occurs by predetermination is the creator of the act, whether in eternity or in time'" (*Maqālāt* 227, 228).

533 Qur'ān 7. 171.

534 L. c.

535 L. c.

536 *H* has *qalabat* "turns," instead of *ġalabat*. I find no parallel for the use of *qalaba* with *'alā*.

prevailed over us, and we became an erring people."[537] All that is by a command that exists antecedently in God's knowledge, in which His will is completely fulfilled and His wish realized.

Mu'āwiyah ibn 'Amr relates the following tradition: Zā'idah said, Ṭalḥah ibn Yaḥyā the Qurayšite[538] said, 'Ā'išah bint Ṭalḥah[539] told me, on the authority of 'Ā'išah, Mother of the Faithful, that the Prophet was called to the funeral of a young man of the Helpers to pray for him. 'Ā'išah said, "Blessed, O Apostle of God, be this sparrow of Paradise, who did not evil, neither did it overtake him!" He said, "Or otherwise, O 'Ā'išah! God ordained a people for Paradise, when they were in the loins of their fathers, and a people for Hell, whom He ordained for it when they were in the loins of their fathers."[540] This explains that blessedness precedes its recipients, and misery precedes its recipients. The Prophet said, "Work your works, for everyone does easily that for which he was created."

Another proof. God has said, "Guided indeed is he whom God guideth; but for him whom He misleadeth, thou shalt by no means find a patron, a director,"[541] and, "Many will He mislead by it and many guide,"[542] and so He tells us that He misleads and guides. He has said, "but the wicked shall He cause to err; God doeth what He wisheth,"[543] and so He tells us that He is the "Doer of what He wills,"[544] and since infidelity is one of the things He wills, He makes it and predetermines it and originates it and develops it and creates it. He has explained that by His words "Worship ye what ye carve, when God hath created you and what ye make?;"[545] wherefore, even if their service of idols were a work of theirs, the latter would in any case be a thing created by God. God has also said, "in recompense of their works,"[546] meaning that He recompenses them for their works; and therefore the same thing is true when He speaks of their service of idols and their infidelity towards the Merciful, for if it were a thing that they predetermined and did by themselves, they would do and predetermine what lies outside the predetermination of their Lord and His operation; and how can they possess a predetermination and an operation and a power that do not belong to their Lord? He who thinks that makes God deficient. May God be far above the belief of those who make Him deficient! Do you not agree that, when one thinks that human beings know what God does

537 Qur'ān 23. 108.

538 Perhaps the Ṭalḥah ibn Yaḥyā who died in 762.

539 Niece of 'Ā'išah, Moth of the Faithful.

540 Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad* VI, 208.

541 Qur'ān 18. 16.

542 Ibid. 2. 24.

543 Ibid. 14. 32.

544 Ibid. 11. 109.

545 Ibid. 37. 93, 94.

546 Ibid. 32. 17.

not know, it is as though he gave them knowledge that is not included in the knowledge of God, and made them equal with God? And so likewise, he who thinks that human beings make and predetermine what God does not predetermine and that they have the power to do what He has not the power to do, gives them authority and power and ability that he does not give to the Merciful. May God be very far above the belief of the people [p. 69] of falsehood and slander and lying and insolence!

Answer. It may be said to them: Does the infidel make infidelity corrupt, vain, and self-contradictory? And so if they say yes, the answer is: How can he make it corrupt, self-contradictory, and vile, when he is firmly convinced that it is good, and sound, and the best of religions? And since that is impossible because an act is not really an act except on the part of one who knows it according to the real nature upon which it is grounded (just as it is impossible that there should be an act on the part of one who does not know it as an act), then God must be the one who predetermines infidelity and creates it as infidelity, corrupt, false, and self-contradictory, contrary to the truth and to what is right.

Chapter Containing the *Kalām* Concerning the Intercession and the Going Forth from Hell.

It may also be said to them: The Muslims have unanimously agreed that the Apostle of God has the power of intercession. Then for whom is the intercession? Is it for sinners who commit mortal sins, or for the devout faithful? Therefore, if they say, "For sinners who commit mortal sins," they agree; but if they say, "For the faithful who are told the good news of Paradise and receive the promise of it," the answer is: Then, since they receive the promise of Paradise and are told the good news of it, and God does not break His promise, what is the meaning of the Prophet's intercession for a people whom, according to you, it is impossible for God not to cause to enter His Paradise?[547] And what is the meaning of your words[547] "They have deserved it of God and merited it of Him"? For, since "God will not wrong anyone the weight of a mote,"[548] their retardation from Paradise is a wrong; but the intercessors intercede with God only that He may do no wrong, according to your opinions. May God be very far above your calumny against Him! Wherefore, if they say, "The Prophet intercedes with God that He may increase His bounty towards them, not that He may cause them to enter His Paradise," the answer is: Has not God already promised them that? Therefore He said, "He will pay them their due recompense and out of

[547] *H*: "And one of the things you say is. . . ."
[548] Qur'ān 4. 44.

His bounty will He increase them;"[549] and God does not break His promises. Hence he intercedes with God, according to you, only that He may not break His promise; and this belief is an evidence of ignorance on your part. The intercession in question is only for those who deserve punishment, that their punishment may be removed from them, or for those to whom He has not promised a thing, that He may bestow it upon them; and so, without doubt, since the promise of the bestowal precedes, there is no room for intercession.

Question. If they ask concerning God's words "no plea shall they offer, save for whom He pleaseth;"[550] the answer concerning that is: "*Save for whom He pleaseth*" among them—they shall intercede for *him*. There is a tradition that the intercession of the Prophet is for the people who have committed mortal sins, and there is a tradition on the authority of the Prophet that sinners will go forth from Hell.

[p. 70] Chapter Containing the *Kalām* Concerning the Pool.

The Mu'tazilah also deny the Pool; but there are traditions about it on the authority of the Prophet, from many sources; and on the authority of the Companions, without disagreement; and 'Affān relates the following tradition: Ḥammād ibn Salamah told us on the authority of 'Alī ibn Zayd, and he on the authority of al-Ḥasan,[551] and he on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik,[552] that he mentioned the Pool in the presence of 'Ubaydallāh ibn Ziyād[553] and he denied it, and Anas learned of it. He said, "Indeed, by God, I will attend to him!" He went to him and said, "What did you say about the Pool?" 'Ubaydallāh said, "Have you heard the Prophet speak of it?" He said, "I have heard the Prophet more than such-and-such a number of times say, 'The space between its extremities'—meaning the Pool—'is the space between Aylah[554] and Mecca,' or 'between Ṣan'ā' and Mecca, and its vessels are more numerous than the stars of heaven.'"

Aḥmad ibn Ḥamdallāh ibn Yūnus relates the following tradition: Ibn Abī Zā'idah told us on the authority of 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Umayr,[555] and he on the authority of Jundub ibn Sufyān, I heard the Apostle of God say, "I have explained the Pool to you clearly in many *aḥbār*."

[549] Ibid. 4. 172.
[550] Ibid. 21. 28, 29.
[551] Died ca. 669.
[552] Died ca. 709.
[553] Died 686.
[554] At the head of the Gulf of 'Aqabah. The Ilah of the text is an error.
[555] Died ca. 753.

Chapter Containing the *Kalām* Concerning the Punishment of the Grave.

The Mu'tazilah [556] also deny the punishment of the grave; but there are traditions about it on the authority of the Prophet from many sources, and on the authority of his Companions. It has not been related on the authority of any of them that he denied it or rejected it or gainsaid it: and so it must be an *ijmā'* of the Companions of the Prophet. Abū Bakr ibn Abī Šaybah [557] relates the following tradition: Abū Mu'āwiyah told us on the authority of al-A'maš, and he on the authority of Abū Ṣāliḥ, and he on the authority of Abū Hurayrah, The Apostle of God said, "Take refuge with God from the punishment of the grave."

Aḥmad ibn Isḥāq al-Ḥaḍramī relates the following tradition: Wuhayb told us, Mūsā ibn 'Uqbah [558] told us, Umm Ḫālid bint Ḫālid ibn Sa'īd ibn al-'Āṣ told me that she heard the Apostle of God take refuge from the punishment of the grave.

Anas ibn Mālik relates, on the authority of the Prophet, that he said, "Were it not that you would not bury each other, I would surely ask God to let you hear of the punishment of the grave what He has let me hear."

Another proof. Among the things that explain the punishment of the infidels in the graves are the words of God "It is the fire to which they shall be exposed morning and evening, and on the day when the Hour shall arrive—'Bring in the people of Pharaoh [p. 71] into the severest punishment;'" [559] wherefore He places their punishment on a day when the Hour shall arrive, after their exposure to the fire in the world morning and evening. He has also said, "twice will We chastise them"—once by the sword and another time in their graves—, "then shall they be given over to a great chastisement" [560]—in the next world. God also tells us that the martyrs are richly sustained and rejoice in God's bounty *in this world*; for He has said, "And repute not those who are slain in God's path to be dead. Nay, alive with their Lord, are they richly sustained; rejoicing in what God of His bounty hath vouchsafed them, filled with joy for those who follow after them, but have not yet overtaken them, that on them nor fear shall come, nor grief;" [561] and these things can exist only in this world, because those who have not overtaken them are alive, not dead nor slain.

[556] The Ḫārijites also denied it (*Maqālāt* 127).
[557] Died ca. 848.
[558] Died 758.
[559] Qur'ān 40. 49.
[560] Ibid. 9. 102.
[561] Ibid. 3. 163, 164.

Chapter Containing the *Kalām* Concerning the Imāmate of Abū Bakr the Veracious.[562]

God has said, "God hath promised to those of you who believe and do the things that are right, that He will cause them to succeed others in the land, as He gave succession to those who were before them, and that He will establish for them that religion which they delight in, and that after their fears He will give them security in exchange. They shall worship me; nought shall they join with me." [563] He has also said, "those who, if We establish them in this land, will observe prayer, and pay alms of obligation, and enjoin what is right and forbid what is evil." [564] God has also praised the Emigrants, and the Helpers, and the first to accept Islām, and the people of acceptable fealty; and the Qur'ān has clearly proclaimed the praises of the Emigrants and the Helpers, in many passages; and it has praised the people of acceptable fealty, and therefore God has said, "Well pleased now hath God been with the believers when they plighted fealty to thee under the tree" [565]—the verse. Those whom God praised and commended have agreed unanimously upon the imāmate of Abū Bakr the Veracious, and they have called him the caliph of the Apostle of God, and pledged him fealty, and obeyed him, and confessed his excellence; for he was the best of the Muslim fellowship in all the good qualities that qualified him for the imāmate: knowledge, and frugality (*zuhd*), and power of judgment, and diplomacy in the Community, and other things besides.

Another proof, from the Qur'ān, on the imāmate of the Veracious. God has furnished proof of the imāmate of Abū Bakr in the Sūrah of the Immunity; [566] and therefore He said to the hangers-back, who would not help His Prophet, and those who remained behind, not taking the field with him, "say, 'By no means shall ye ever take the field with me, and by no means shall ye fight an enemy with me,'" [567] and He has also said in another Sūrah, "They who took the field with you will say, when ye go forth to the spoil to take it, 'Let us follow you.' Fain would they change the word of God" [568]—meaning His words "By no means shall ye ever take the field with me"—then [p. 72] He said, "thus hath God said already. They will say, 'Nay, ye are jealous of us.' Nay! They

[562] *Aṣ-ṣiddīq.* The name, according to a tradition, was bestowed upon him by Gabriel (Wensinck, Handbook 5; Ibn Sa'd, ed. Sachau III I 120).
[563] Qur'ān 24. 54.
[564] Ibid. 22. 42.
[565] Ibid. 48. 18. The "people of acceptable fealty" are the Companions who promised (A. H. 6), upon hearing a false report of 'Uṯmān's death, to remain faithful to the Prophet in his conflict with the Qurayš.
[566] Sūrah 9.
[567] Qur'ān 9. 84.
[568] Ibid. 48. 15.

are men of little understanding." [569] He has also said, "Say to those of the Arabs who remain behind, 'Ye shall be called forth against a people of mighty valor. Ye shall do battle with them or they shall profess Islām. If ye obey, a goodly recompense will God give you; but if ye turn back'"—meaning "if ye fail to answer him who summons you to fight them"—"'as ye turned back aforetime, He will punish you with a grievous punishment.'" [570] Now he who summons them to that is not the Prophet, to whom God said, "say, 'By no means shall ye ever take the field with me, and by no means shall ye fight an enemy with me;'" and He said also in the Sūrah of Victory,[571] "Fain would they change the word of God;" and therefore He refuses to let them take the field with His Prophet, and makes their taking the field with him a changing of His word; and from that it necessarily follows that the summoner who will summon them to fighting is one who will summon after His Prophet. People say, "They are Persians," and they say, "The people of the Yamāmah;" and it is true that Abū Bakr the Veracious fought with them and issued a summons to fight with them.[572] And if they are the Byzantines,[573] the Veracious fought with them also; and if they are the Persian people,[574] there was fighting with them in the days of Abū Bakr and 'Umar fought with them after him and made an end of them.[575] Now since the imāmate of 'Umar is necessarily true, the imāmate of Abū Bakr is necessarily true, just as the imāmate of 'Umar is necessarily true, because Abū Bakr transmitted the imāmate to him; and therefore the Qur'ān furnishes proof of the imāmate of the Veracious and the Distinguisher;[575a] and since the imāmate of Abū Bakr, after the Apostle of God, is necessarily true, he must be the best of the Muslims.

Another proof: The ijmā' on the imāmate of Abū Bakr the Veracious. Among the things that prove the imāmate of the Veracious is the fact that the Muslims all followed him, and were subject to his imāmate, and said to him, "O caliph of the Apostle of God!" We have also seen that 'Alī and al-'Abbās obeyed him and acknowledged his imāmate. Now since the Rāfiḍah say, "'Alī is the one designated for his imāmate," and the Rāwandiyyah say, "Al-'Abbās is the one designated for his imāmate," there are but three beliefs among men with regard to the imāmate: (1) there are those who say, "The Prophet designated the imāmate of the Veracious, who is the *imām* after the Apostle;" (2) there is the belief of those who say, "He designated the imāmate of 'Alī;" and (3) there

[569] L. c.
[570] Ibid. 48. 16.
[571] Sūrah 48.
[572] Weil, Geschichte der Chalifen I 21 ff.
[573] Ibid. 37 ff.
[574] Ibid. 30 ff.
[575] Ibid. ch. 2.
[575a] 'Umar.

is the belief of those who say, "The *imām* after him is al-'Abbās." The belief of those who say, "He is Abū Bakr the Veracious," is based on the unanimous consent of the Muslims and the witness of it he received; and, furthermore, we see that 'Alī and al-'Abbās obeyed him and agreed upon his imāmate; and therefore he must be *imām* after the Prophet [p. 73] by the unanimous consent of the Muslims. Nobody may say, "The private opinions of 'Alī and al-'Abbās are different from their expressed opinions," for if this claim could legitimately be made, unanimous consent would not be sound, and one might make that statement regarding every unanimous consent of the Muslims. This disposes of the secret meaning of unanimous consent, because God has not subjected us in the unanimous consent to the private opinions of men, but only to their expressed opinions. Now since that is so, the unanimous consent and the agreement upon the imāmate of Abū Bakr the Veracious are clear; and since the imāmate of the Veracious is proved, the imāmate of the Distinguisher is proved, because the Veracious designated him, and committed the imāmate to him, and chose him for it, and he was the best of them after Abū Bakr. The imāmate of 'Uṯmān after 'Umar is proved by the act of the members of the Council,[576] appointed by 'Umar, who committed the imāmate to him, wherefore they chose 'Uṯmān, and consented to his imāmate, and agreed unanimously upon his excellence and his justice. The imāmate of 'Alī after 'Uṯmān is proved by the act of the Companions who had the right to invest and to deprive, for they committed the imāmate to him, and another proof of it is that no other member of the Council was called to the imāmate in his time, for they agreed unanimously upon his excellence and his justice, and if they refused to allow him to claim sovereignty for himself in the time of the caliphs before him, it is true on the face of it that it was not the time of his elevation. And so since he stood by himself at a later time, it is true on the face of it that the latter is the time of his elevation. Then when the sovereignty became his it was open and public and did not diminish until he attained to right direction and leadership, as the caliphs who were before him and the just *imāms* had attained to right direction and leadership, following the Book of their Lord and the *sunnah* of their Prophet. These are the four *imāms* whose justice and excellence are unanimously agreed upon.

Šurayḥ ibn an-Nu'mān has related the following tradition: Ḥašraj ibn Nubātah told us on the authority of Sa'īd ibn Jumhān, Safīnah[577] told

[576] Ibid. 129. The members of the Council were: 'Alī, 'Uṯmān, 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf, az-Zubayr, Ṭalḥah, and Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās. See also ibid. 149 ff.
[577] A Persian client of the Prophet. Died ca. 708.

me, The Apostle of God said, "The caliphate shall be among my people thirty years, then a kingdom after that." Then Safīnah said to me, Take the caliphate of Abū Bakr, and the caliphate of 'Umar, and the caliphate of 'Uṯmān, then, said he, take the caliphate of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, said he, and you find them thirty years.[578]

That, then, is a proof of the imāmate of the four *imāms*. As for what happened among 'Alī and az-Zubayr and 'Ā'išah, it was only a matter of interpretation and *ijtihād*. 'Alī is the *imām*, and all of them are people of the *ijtihād*. The Prophet has borne witness concerning Paradise in their favor, and the witness is a proof that they all were right in their *ijtihād*. Likewise what happened between 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah was a matter of interpretation and *ijtihād*. All [p. 74] the Companions are trustworthy *imāms*, not to be suspected of error in Religion. God and His Apostle praise them all, and we render our service by extolling and magnifying them and being their helpers, and by opposing everyone who would detract from the honor of any of them. We have made, regarding the acknowledgment of the *imāms*, a statement and an assertion. Praise be to God first and last!

[578] Cf. Wensinck, op. cit. 109.

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